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# LET FRANCE EXPLAIN

FREDERICK BAUSMAN

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**LET FRANCE EXPLAIN**



# LET FRANCE EXPLAIN

BY  
FREDERICK BAUSMAN

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State of Washington*



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## PREFACE

IN the last three years there have been revealed about one thousand documents and diplomatic letters on the relations between France and Russia. All these with fatal uniformity show that between 1904 and 1914 the Government of France gave itself up to the dangerous policies of the infamous Court of St. Petersburg.

Extraordinary though these revelations are, the world has heard almost nothing of them. Indulgent toward France, we have received them in silence. But her present Government drives Europe to desperation by claims based on outraged innocence. Nothing can be done to bring France to reason until the truth is known and her Government knows it to be known.

That Government has been unwilling indeed to discuss documents so embarrassing. The scandalous secret treaty of 1917 made by the Poincaré administration with Russia has not, I believe, been discussed by them at all. Even the general treaty with Russia of 1892 was not published until two years after the outbreak of the war, when its bellicose terms were forced to the light. A special Yellow Book was then tardily issued concerning it. As to the French Cabinet between 1912 and 1914, the recent revelations of the Iswolsky correspondence have been ignored, but as the present work goes to press, we are told that a Yellow Book on that will be issued. The Yellow Books of the French Government have been of course only the Government's selection and not, as in the case of the German and

Russian files, the result of search by hostile and censorious hands.

At the root of the international adjustments lies, in spite of everybody, the question of guilt. Even if Germany be guilty, there was undoubtedly guilt also in France, which lately shocks the United States, through no less a person than M. Loucheur, by the hint that after all France does not really owe us what she borrowed.

People must learn the truth, that the Poincaré Government, exulting in the creation of the greatest standing armies that either France or Russia had ever had, and in keen expectation of English aid, had their war party too. This party was in civil as well as military control.

Since the Washington Conference, moreover, there is spread in the United States a theory that the late horrible war was the fruit of skilful British intrigues for the crushing of Germany, and that France was a mere victim of the collision. Especially does there exist, even in circles friendly to England, an idea that by speaking out vigorously she might have prevented war. This book will show the error of that pernicious argument.

France is a spoiled child, and a dangerously spoiled child. She must be reminded of her Delcassés, her Millerands, and her Poincarés. She and the people of the world must be reminded of those banquets at St. Petersburg in furtherance of an alliance, the terms of which were kept secret so many years and which, after the Russian revolutionists made candour unavoidable, disclosed a really offensive arrangement by which Germany was so to be dealt with that she would have to defend "on both the east and the west at the same time."

The world must be reminded of the extent to which France armed Russia, of the immense simultaneous preparations of both, and of the reckless offensive conduct of French

public men toward Germany during a whole decade preceding the war.

Whatever may be the censure of recent French Governments and their pre-war policies in this book, no German suggested the work, no German contributed to it, no German ever saw the written page. It is the work of an American of stock long settled in the United States, who has but two friends in what was formerly the German Empire, and who has not been in Germany since 1913.

From an Ulster Protestant mother I have derived a perhaps extreme admiration for English institutions, and from a remote German ancestry a perhaps pardonable belief that Germans—though I have never got on very well with North Germans myself—have as good a record for peace as Frenchmen. A friend of France, I rejoice in her victory at the Marne; a friend of European civilization, I rejoice that the German Army was able to prevent the Russian despotism from enjoying its dark bargain of 1917 with France for the division of Central Europe.

The friends of Europe do not wish Germany to be destroyed. Yet under the Treaty of Versailles Germany has paid to this date the vast sum of 11,400,000,000 gold marks, of which nothing has been applied on her debt. Two-fifths have gone to support *the armies of occupation*, chiefly French.

THE AUTHOR.





### ERRATA

Page 61, line 2, *for* indefatigable *read* indefinable.

„ 66, footnote 3, *for* 1913 *read* 1912.

„ 105, line 11, *for* rights *read* right.

„ 134, line 10, *for* latter *read* letter.

„ 142, line 26, *for* bourgeois *read* bourgeoisie.

„ 148, line 23, *for* has *read* had.

„ 186, footnote, last line, *for* conceding *read* concealing.

„ 190, line 21, *for* was *read* were.

„ 192, footnote 2, *for* 272 *read* 271.

„ 211, line 20, *for* of *read* to.

„ 212, footnote, line 1, *for* come *read* came.

„ 216, line 28, *for* had *read* would.

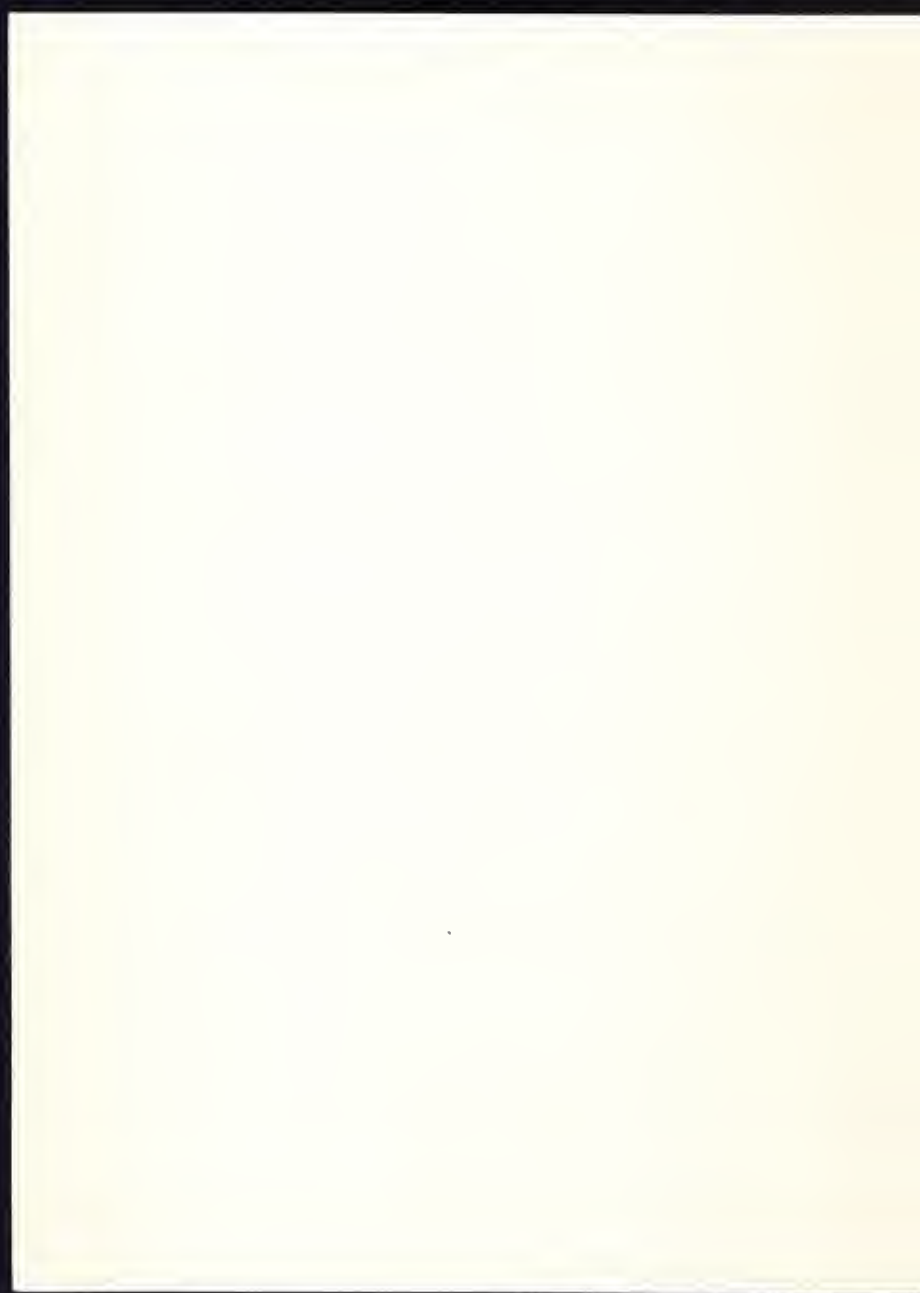
„ 224, footnote, *for* 1914 *read* 1921.

„ 226, footnote 3, *for* 9 *read* 49.

„ 227, footnote 1, *for* Revue de France *read* Revue des  
Deux Mondes, 1921, p. 248.

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The typographical errors in the French text on pp. 34, 57, 73, 209 and 231 have been noticed, and will be corrected in later impressions.



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# LET FRANCE EXPLAIN

## CHAPTER I

### MARTIAL FRANCE

You have often admired in England, no doubt, those numerous castles which, though ages old, are still good habitations. These, together with the villages and sweet greens around them, have been saved by the sea and by English mariners from the pride of France.

The English Channel is the moat of liberty. It is the only boundary in Europe that in the last four centuries has never been crossed by a French army of invasion. But for that water Richelieu, Louis XIV or Bonaparte would have trampled the hedgerows of England.

Along the Rhine, on the other hand, you see great numbers of burned and fallen towers. Of these too many were crumbled by the thunderbolts of Versailles. When Matthew Arnold spoke of "France famed in all great arts, in none supreme," there was one great art which he quite forgot. In the art of war France is and ever has been supreme. She has had many generals of the first rank but not one pre-eminent statesman since the death of Richelieu, himself famous in bloody wars. Neither has she, with all her wealth, produced one master of international finance, industry or transportation.

No other people in Europe have so often sought glory in war, have so well and frequently written about war, have so perfectly laid down the principles of war. Does not every country in Europe show the scars of France? The traveller in the streets of Paris need not wholly lose his way if he will bear in mind, when he scans the signposts, the names of invaded nations.

During the general war we were inclined to forget the innumerable offensive wars of France, but in the three years of peace just passed she has done everything possible to remind us of them. While sensible England, with her own wounds still running, is exerting herself to heal both the victors and the vanquished, France not only maintains vast wasteful armaments, but is peevish with every one of her late allies. With what patience, for example, do I see such a book as that from a French officer, *L'Angleterre et Nous*, in which he not only counsels a French alliance with Germany but declares that France was the rescuer of England.

Those who read the present book will find that England saved France in a war into which the Poincaré administration and the Delcassés pushed Europe by arming Russia to attack Germany, a war in which they well calculated England would have to join them out of simple military necessity, a war which England made reasonable effort to avert, but which the French militarists knew that England, with or without Sir Edward Grey, would be dragged into on the side of France, even if the French themselves provoked the war.

German diplomatists, blundering at times and blustering at times, obscured the really aggressive designs of the Delcassés, the Millerands and Poincarés, but the latter gentlemen, you will find, were more artful by far than Sir Edward Grey, who, though open to criticism, was, compared to the diplomatists of the Quai d'Orsay or the Élysée, a paragon of candour.

One fundamental error was implanted in us at the start, that Russia had greater rights in Serbia than Austria had. This I shall disprove. Russia was trying to get those rights which never had been conceded and which, if Russia was to be kept out of Western Europe, never should have been conceded. To Austria, at least, Serbia was worse than our Mexico. The situation was comparable to that of a black republic in Mexico continually flooding our Southern States with propaganda to create a rebellion in our negro population, or of an Ireland, backed by France and filling English workshops with seditious literature by every mail. But, the impression starting among us the other way, the Berlin

Government's support of Austria, though right to begin with and at the last withdrawn, seemed very wrong. The French politicians knew that to keep this state out of Russian hands was as vital to Austria as it was to England to keep Belgium from the powerful hands of Germany, but the Poincaré Government was in 1912 and 1913 reckless as to war.

Germany was backing her ally in something essential to the life of both; France backing her ally in the latter's ambition and extension.

Another error they allowed us to fall into was the belief that France went to war only because Germany declared it. This they have misled us in by not revealing, until after the passions of war, their unpublished treaty of 1892, by which, as they are forced to argue themselves, France should be automatically at war against Germany when Russia was.

So saturated is the French temper with militarism that they think they can even boast of it without reproach. In them apparently it is no fault. Let me give the most striking illustration. Turn to their Yellow Book, issued after the declaration of war, to Document No. 5, a confidential report made to the Minister for Foreign Affairs before the war, "On the State of Public Opinion in Germany." The German people, it says, are beginning to complain of a certain advantage that the French have been gaining over them. They are just discovering, these Germans, he relates proudly, that France

*our country, conquered in 1870, has never ceased to carry on war, to float her flag and maintain the prestige of her arms in Asia and Africa and to conquer vast territories; Germany on the other hand has lived on her reputation.*

Such is the language which France thought she could afford to use in a document published to the world, a document intended to convince mankind that France was wholly peaceable and her neighbour restless and warlike, but which, through her very complacency, betrays what the Germans have always contended, that the greatest single military power in the world, Germany, abstained from war for forty-three years.



Since I began this book there has occurred a conference in Washington for the limitation of armaments. What will ultimately come of it is not yet clear, but that the French mean to keep themselves in a state of excessive armament if they can is not to be denied. Their proposal to supplement a huge army by a vast fleet of submarines is as much a menace to England as they themselves were lately pleased to say that the German Navy was. But these people are going further. They are arming Africans in vast numbers and are boasting of an intention to ferry them across the Mediterranean. Colonial Minister Sarraut points to "our Colonial empire, of which so little account seems to be taken here but which forms for us, among other attributes, a *vast reservoir of man power*." <sup>1</sup> This assuredly is not comforting to the white races of Europe.

It is a common saying that people of a pronounced artistic temperament, though they may under many circumstances and for a time conduct themselves with prudence and good sense, are sure to disclose a weakness and in some course of conduct to depart, to the great distress of everybody, from what is practical and wise. We have this folly shown by the French in their insisting upon an indemnity from the Germans which the most noted economists in the world have with one voice proclaimed to be, however justly imposed, beyond all possibility of collection, and which cannot be collected without the economic destruction of Europe. Yet, contrary to the advice of both Italy and England, which suffered incalculably in the war, and contrary to the advice of the best minds in the United States, which also made great sacrifices in the war, the French at present insist upon a policy of collecting from an exhausted bankrupt—even if the rest of Europe be ruined by the attempt.

Speaking now of Germany, this is one of the countries which France had been assaulting repeatedly during three hundred years. It was Bismarck's unanswered retort that France had had twenty wars with Germany, in not one of which Germany had been the aggressor, for, as Earl Loreburn says: "It would be a falsification of history to deny, that for many years, under the Bourbons, France repeatedly

<sup>1</sup> *The World*, December 28, 1921.



attacked one or another of the German states without provocation." <sup>1</sup> That this was undeniable is known to most students of history, but I did not think that France would make an actual boast of such a thing and proclaim it as a policy until, as I shall now tell you, it has very recently been made plain to me by literature to which their Government has been pleased to give direct encouragement.

A few months ago I happened to pick up a little book, on the title-page of which was stamped in the form of a circular seal "Consulat de France." Published in Paris after the war, it was turned into English there as *Two Histories Face to Face*.<sup>2</sup> Some days later in the public library I came upon another copy and subsequently several copies at my club, all stamped with the seal of the local French consulate; so it became very plain that the French Government wished Americans to read this little book and attached some importance to it.

To me this work, when I read it, appeared a very mischievous one, an attempt not merely to justify many bad French wars but to exalt them.

The whole argument, from the beginning to the end, was that anarchy in Germany, and "anarchy" was the word frequently used, was a good thing for France, nay, something due to so fine a people as the French, that France had always done her best to keep the German states divided even though their being divided subjected them to poverty and to invasion by other states. All this seemed to me an astounding policy to avow against a people who wished to unite under the same language, the same blood, and the same laws and customs. I wondered what this writer would have had to say if England proposed to throw France back again into the wrangling feuds of Burgundy, Aquitaine, Normandy, Brittany and the like, thinking it better for the security of her island to have France carved in pieces.

As for this writer, ignoring the frightful prostration of disunited Germany, a prostration which has filled all historians with pity, he dilates on the advantage to France. He

<sup>1</sup> *How the War Came*, p. 251. Earl Loreburn was Lord Chancellor under the Campbell-Bannerman Government.

<sup>2</sup> By Jacques Bainville, translated by Paul Lefavre, Paris, Nouvelle Librairie Nationale (1919).

assumes that everybody will want this sort of thing to continue or to be revived in favour of his country, and when he mentions that by reason of the weakness of the divided German states one of Louis XIV's generals was able to ravage a whole German province in an unexampled manner, he assures us that the good king actually "reproved" the man.

Now there may be many people so bitter against Germany to-day as to rejoice in any kind of injury whatsoever for the future that France may inflict upon Germany, though it be calamitous to Europe in general, but even these people do not like to have it revealed that France may have been to blame to begin with. People look back no further than the war of 1870, which, contrary to the unanimous voice of historians, we have been lately taught was forced upon France by Germany, whereas it was just one of those wars which France herself deliberately sought in this policy so candidly revealed by Bainville of preventing the German states from uniting. These people will learn something by reading M. Bainville's peculiar book, which, I think, very much overreaches itself. You will not read long before you will find that historians are correct in saying that that adventurer, Napoleon III, was determined to have a war with Prussia so that the German anarchy or division might continue and no consolidated Germany be created.

This curious book is not the loose and aimless effusion, you perceive, of some writer essaying on his own account.<sup>1</sup> It has the direct encouragement of the French Government, so we can pay strict attention to the extraordinary doctrines which it advances.

For my part, I was expecting him to show that Germany had been some sort of original assailant far back in the Middle Ages, but this gentleman is at no pains to make any such claim and to get a starting-point of wrongdoing against the Germans. On the contrary, he tells us that "before the sixteenth century the wars between France and Germany were simply skirmishes,"<sup>2</sup> or what Milton calls "the mere battles of kites and crows." Thus we have the beginning

<sup>1</sup> M. Bainville is I believe, the editor of *Action Française*.

<sup>2</sup> P. 40.

of the sixteenth century to date from, and we do not need to go further than this author himself to show that if ever people had a right to regard the French as their predestined enemies, it is the Germans.

Nobody can reflect with much patience on the detestable temper of the German military class and of their arbitrary Junkers, but those who have gone even into the surface of history know that the French have given them abundant provocation during the several centuries of which M. Bainville is so proud.

You must actually hear what this propagandist says in his own words. He quotes with pleasure a German author named Biedermann as saying: "The German patriot can only blush looking back at the time when, while Louis XIV was annexing German states with his haughty ambition, the blossom of the German nobility was rendering him its homage, feeling deeply honoured if the last of his courtiers was good enough to approve so many exertions in aping the French Court."<sup>1</sup> Then for himself M. Bainville adds: "*Under the orders of the King of France thousands of them were making war for us against their own country. The famous name of the Marshal of Saxony evokes the fusion reached by that Europe which a contemporary called French Europe.*"<sup>2</sup>

Coming to a conference at Ratisbon he says it is unnecessary to charge the French emissaries with fomenting divisions between the German states; for the emissary of France, he says, "does not occupy his post for any other purpose. He goes there in order to favour German discord."<sup>3</sup>

Arriving at the nineteenth century, he tells us that *the whole policy of France "was to prevent Germany from realizing her unity as France had realized her own,"*<sup>4</sup> which was exactly the policy that made Louis Napoleon in 1870 seek a war, as I have said before, with the states of Germany coalescing under Bismarck, a war which Germany had to win in order to be a united country, but of which you have been given during the last few years many grossly erroneous accounts.<sup>5</sup>

As I say, this writer dates this meddlesome policy of France far back. For instance, he says of it as early as the

<sup>1</sup> P. 106.

<sup>2</sup> P. 107.

<sup>3</sup> P. 93.

<sup>4</sup> P. 63.

<sup>5</sup> See my chapter on "The War of 1870."

seventeenth century: "To fix and organize the German anarchy was to be the political masterpiece of the French seventeenth century."<sup>1</sup>

Neither Americans nor English have ever believed that we were shedding our blood for France in order that she might achieve the permanent destruction of any other country, but if some of us were even in such a passion with Germany as to contemplate that, they surely contemplated it only in the belief that Germany had been a continual aggressor against France. To historians it is not astonishing that the contrary is true, but doubtless it is surprising to people who have not the time for research to know that France had always regarded Germany as a sort of hunting-ground for her kings. There is no gainsaying that the French, with all their fine qualities, ascribe a peculiar privilege to themselves from their intellectual culture. They still deem themselves what Voltaire proudly called them, "the whipped cream of Europe."

As for the future, this author is at no pains to conceal his purpose. Germany, he says, must be politically weakened and divided. "Disunited, the Germans become peaceful, they even contribute their share towards universal civilization. They develop whatever qualities they possess." That is to say, when they can be ordered about by French kings, of course they cannot conduct defensive war. They have to suffer in silence, lose some of their provinces, and even imitate their masters. M. Bainville tells us that during this period of subjection by France the Germans produced many poets and artists, which they have ceased to do since, but of course he is not at the pains to tell us that other great industrial nations like England and the United States have during the same period also not been producing great poets and artists; that as Germany became united she cheapened the products of the earth for the plain people of the world, and that she contributed to social science and the well-being of the working classes incalculably during her growth.

Nothing but France this writer will have us consider, without admitting that France was never assailed by a German army until after Bonaparte had added the horrors

<sup>1</sup> P. 61.



of his assaults on Germany to those of Richelieu, Louis XIV and Louis XV, and until Napoleon III had avowed that a union of the German states could not be permitted. I may add that he says as little as he can about Napoleon III, whose *five wars in twenty years* he has perhaps overlooked, as well as his blackmailing Italy into a surrender of Savoy and Nice as a condition to his "permitting" that divided country also to unite.<sup>1</sup>

He tells us that *the prevention of German unity was "a matter-of-fact plan, inspired by good sense and thoroughly led by the clear consciousness of the national interest."*<sup>2</sup> Then he assures us that Europe was very happy after the Thirty Years' War was ended, a war which, he does not remind the reader, was thirty years of internal agony, because Germany was not allowed by foreign kings to form her unity, was brought in many districts to a loss of nine-tenths of her population and to a general starvation by the successive inroads of Russians, French, Swedes and Poles. In other words, the half-dying body beside France, which had never yet attacked France, gave to France sensations of repose.

He is very frank, is he not, this interesting M. Bainville? He tells the truth as a robber boasts of his game. The same truth was confessed by a much greater Frenchman, Jean Jaurès, but with humiliation: "From Charles VIII to Louis XIV and from the latter to Napoleon, France had too often abused her national unity, attained before that of other countries, by treating brutally nations still divided and unorganized."<sup>3</sup>

For my part, I had always believed that the divided condition of Germany was one of the calamities of Europe, yet I now read a book, distributed by French officials, which would persuade us that, on the contrary, it was an extremely

<sup>1</sup> This abominable concession caused unhappy Cavour the loss of the friendship of his fellow patriot, Garibaldi, whose birthplace was Nice. Cavour could only plead that he must either make France a present of this territory or have a war with her.

<sup>2</sup> P. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Jean Jaurès par Chas. Rappoport*, p. 71. The complacent Bérard pleasantly recounts the German miseries of three hundred years. "Mais durant ces trois siècles toutes les armées de l'Europe prirent cette 'bonne' Allemagne pour un champ de bataille ou de campement . . . tous les soudards la pillèrent et mangèrent à l'envi." *La France et Guillaume II*, p. 99 (1907).

useful thing, that France profited a great deal by it, that she took from Germany whatever parts of that country she could, and that all this misery was beneficial to mankind.

It will be remembered that it was during this period that Louis XIV annexed Alsace and Lorraine, in the greater part of which the language spoken was German. After the long possession of it by France, I nevertheless felt that the Germans ought not to have taken it back, but perhaps I have been overlooking an argument in their favour that is fair. Louis XIV was not the last of the French kings to assault divided Germany. On the contrary, Bonaparte treated her with incredible severities and insults, some of which are typified in the well-known picture of a beautiful queen. As these German states, stung at last to common action by the scourge of Bonaparte and getting a breathing spell after his fall, proceed to unite under Bismarck, another adventurer appears upon the throne of France and, in 1870, forbids the banns.

M. Bainville's book has set me thinking as few books have. It is cold, heartless and impudent. It reminds me that in the hills of Alsace-Lorraine was the only natural frontier that Germany could have against French assault, unless she should retire to the other side of the Rhine and give up provinces that never had been other than German and were not claimed by any French king as part of Alsace-Lorraine. In a word, to interfere with the prescriptive title of France to Alsace-Lorraine and to revoke those countries would have been wicked in a Germany wilfully assaulting France. Was it wicked, though, in a country provoked by determined policy of assault in a martial neighbour, and resolved at last to have fortified positions on which to meet her? <sup>1</sup>

Moreover, this book of Bainville's does not stand as a solitary effusion. Its doctrines have been supported silently during the last three years by an enormous army maintained by France, while herself on the verge of bankruptcy and Germany entirely disarmed. It is fair, when France challenges us with doctrines like these, to examine her own history.

<sup>1</sup> The learned Professor Rose, of Cambridge, answers the question squarely: "Probably we would have done the same thing, had we been in the same place." Rose's *Germany in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 17, 1902.

It is fair to inquire which, after all, has been the most martial nation in Europe. There can be but one answer, France. Since Luther's time, twice have the French crossed the lofty Pyrenees to attack Spain; six times the mighty Alps to strike at Italy. Austria they have several times attacked. As for Germany, that wretched district, as M. Bainville has just been showing, has been but the bloody playground of French kings, who have repeatedly left it to hunger and woe. Holland the French have twice attacked, Belgium they have once annexed. Nor has Russia escaped, invaded once from the north and once from the south. England, saved from powerful French kings only by the sea, they have repeatedly assailed in her colonies because they regarded her as the one remaining obstacle to their domination of Europe. Nay, our neighbouring country of Mexico had to submit, while we were engaged in arms at home, to a French invasion, and China had to surrender part of her country under a French expedition. As for Syria and Morocco, these furnish but trifling additions to a list of slaughters which sit so easily upon those gay conquerors.

We must let our passions now subside. We must begin to look at some of the immense revelations of historical data made in the last few years through the seizure of the Russian archives and through the frank statements or confessions of exalted participants. It is time, indeed, to inquire into the true causes of this war.

Our own Ambassador Gerard, surely an impartial critic, has left his testimony that the militarism of the German people arises not from fierceness but from fear.<sup>1</sup>

It is my proposal to give the reader the benefit of an enormous mass of new matter and of revelations which could not possibly have been available to us in the first excitements of the European conflict. As I have had to change my mind about many things, I am confident the patient reader will have to change his mind about a good many also. Without going at this time into a citation of authorities, but asking the reader to await the narrative, I may quote one of the most learned of American investigators of the causes of the war, who in three articles of signal acumen

<sup>1</sup> P. 116.

and research, and with much condemnation of the Germans on many points, has finally said :

"These new documents from Berlin and Vienna place Austria in a much more unfavourable light than hitherto. They likewise clear the German Government of the charge *that it deliberately plotted or wanted the war.*"<sup>1</sup> The documents that he refers to as not open to us at the outset, were those showing that the Berlin Government did put upon Austria repeated insistent demands to accept the Serbian reply and that the Austrian Government, evading these demands, concealed from Berlin matters relevant and most important.

In England, always willing to let both sides be heard, a large section already denies that Germany was wholly to blame. Even from France arises a similar protest. M. Georges Demartial in an unanswerable article upbraids Viviani with hypocrisy for saying that the declaration of war by Germany on France was "sudden, odious, unheard-of aggression," when in fact it was matter of treaty that France must strike Germany if Germany and Russia were for any cause at war, and strike *simultaneously* so that Germany must defend on the two fronts at once.<sup>2</sup> Most recently comes Signor Nitti, whose country suffered a deep wound from German invasion, saying, "*Now that Imperial Germany has fallen, it would be absurd to maintain that the responsibility for the war is solely attributable to her.*"<sup>3</sup>

At the very outset we must remember that Germany had opposed to her two powerful countries, each with a grievance, France and Russia being in an alliance admitted, though not as to its sinister terms and details, then revealed. France was full of the spirit of revenge<sup>4</sup> and desire for

<sup>1</sup> Professor Sidney B. Fay in the *American Historical Review* for October 1920. His first article was one for July 1920 and his last article for January 1921.

<sup>2</sup> As we shall see by the details of this treaty in Chapter VIII and Appendix C.

<sup>3</sup> *Peaceless Europe* (Cassell, 1922), p. 33. Nitti does not absolve Germany from blame by any means, but he scoffs throughout at the charge that she alone was at fault.

<sup>4</sup> M. Poincaré in his recent *Origins of the War* (Cassell, 1922) will not deny that the French always had in mind the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. But "revenge"? No! Now what the world understands by the French desire for a revenge was a successful and punitive war sooner or later to recover those provinces. The intention to get them back in some way he concedes. *The Origins of the War*, p. 26.



eminence again in Europe, while Russia had long and deservedly found Germany in her path from Constantinople to the Baltic. Let us consequently be fair. Since these two nations overwhelmingly outnumbered the Teutons, which in the ordinary course of events is more likely to have sought the quarrel and had least to fear from it? To these must be added England, naturally irritated by the rising navy of Germany and already, though in no treaty of alliance with the others, on terms of intimacy undenied.

We have been told that Germany defiantly plunged into a war against all these odds, when she must have known that her very first losses would be colossal. On the mere declaration of war she must forfeit her wonderful merchant marine. Never did she at any time hope to maintain or attempt to maintain the seas against England. Under these conditions, is it likely she sought a conflict or endeavoured to avoid it? The blockade was a certainty if England should strike, and we now have the unanimous testimony of the German military chiefs that England's taking the seas against them was regarded as a certainty.<sup>1</sup> Did Germany therefore seek the fight, or if she sought it, did she seek it only from despair? These are the interesting things which will be discussed in the following pages.

Has not everybody at times expressed wonder that Germany should have sought war when she was gradually getting all she wanted without it? She possessed exceedingly able business men whom Government was aiding in every conceivable way at home and abroad. Must we not suppose that a Government that had aided business so long and so well had also the sense to avoid war if it could, when it must enter that war outnumbered before and behind, besides being probably locked in from the sea. Why not listen to the more natural argument that a Government so able went into a war against great odds because France and Russia, with their grievances and, as we shall see, at a height of armament beyond what either had ever before possessed, thought it opportune to force a war in which England would have to join them? Is this an absurd hypothesis?

<sup>1</sup> The Kaiser had faint hopes, but none of his advisers had except possibly Bethmann. I think that both these men were merely hoping against hope.

Staggering was the sacrifice at which Germany must even begin a war with England also against her. She had no hope that she could live upon the seas a single day. The telegram round the world that England had declared war was a death sentence on the ships of Germany. They fled, like scattered birds, and by the second dawn there was not a sea in which the sun illumined or the breeze fluttered the colours of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

In tracing the real cause of the war we shall next find that bellicose France, after a deserved defeat in a war wrongfully declared by herself,<sup>2</sup> dedicated her future to revenge. As will appear more fully in the chapter on the Franco-Russian alliance of 1892, she gladly bound herself and her vast wealth in a secret treaty to Russia, the common enemy of the West, and from that time began to bring Europe to its present verge of ruin. It is necessary to add that during the recent war she made another secret arrangement with Russia, by which the latter was to be allowed, in the event of victory, to absorb so much of the West as she desired, France being even bound to use her exertions against Sweden if that little country should seek to escape its doom. Nor was Russia to be bothered with questions about Poland; on the contrary, she was to push her boundaries without restraint through Germany, a shameful interchange of obligations of which England, the common ally, asserts herself to have been wholly ignorant.<sup>3</sup>

I believe this to be one of the basest treaties ever recorded. First, it freed the Tsar from what he had promised Poland at the outset of the war. Second, it involved an injury to the simple and peaceful state of Sweden. Third, it was designed to extend the worst existing despotism over a large part of Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Particularly dramatic was the flight of the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*, which received the fateful message in mid-ocean. Her commander, bursting into tears, put her instantly about and sped, with a speed at which only those engines could drive a ship, to the distant American shore. Even the swift *Cecilie* could not hazard an hour's delay after England had loosed her hounds.

<sup>2</sup> See the unanimous voice of historians against her in the chapter entitled "The War of 1870."

<sup>3</sup> *The Secret Treaties*, as revealed by the Soviets and published by Seymour Cocks, London, 1918. Appendix D. Emile Laloy, in his *Les Documents Secrets publiés par les Bolcheviks*, feels obliged to condense and abbreviate this humiliating bargain. See his p. 156.

France, it is clear, was preparing two armies before the war, her own and a still larger one in Russia. The French Army itself was, by the statistics of her own General Buat, more than equal to the German, while the Russian was immensely larger.<sup>1</sup> The policy of France was to delay the first clash until the Russian forces could get to the German frontier.

To put the matter simply, France was loading the weapons for herself and Russia too ; Russia by general mobilization first drew a weapon, but Germany by superior quickness was able to fire the first shot and this against France. Thereupon France, uttering loud cries, declared herself shamelessly and suddenly assailed. Then followed the blockade, nobody could or would hear the real explanations, and rage swept away history, logic and truth.

Commentators are pointing out to us that while England and Italy strove to prevent the war in that last desperate month, and while Germany also as we know now was, even if too late, endeavouring to control Austria and have Russia wait for discussion, France was doing nothing to dissuade Russia from an unnecessary mobilization which made war against Germany, and therefore a general European war, a certainty. Indeed, France in her Yellow Book discloses that she did not make even an attempt.<sup>2</sup>

Particularly noticeable and unfair in every diplomatic document from the side of France is her assumption that in her military increases she *simply followed of necessity those of Germany*. *She concedes nothing against herself, her making the German increases necessary by those which Russia was making at French instance and with French money*. Yet even one of her own military authorities conceded that "it was to guard against the Russian danger that Germany made her military law of 1913,"<sup>3</sup> and the German Chancellor, in introducing the Army Bill of 1913, distinctly refers to Russia's expanding her military plans against German remonstrance.<sup>4</sup>

"Russia alone," says Signor Nitti, "represented the peril

<sup>1</sup> See chapter on "Allied Preparedness." The Russian standing army was 2,320,000 ; the German 870,000.

<sup>2</sup> Stowell's *Diplomacy of the War*, vol. i, pp. 519, 520, 521.

<sup>3</sup> From *L'Allemagne en Peril*, of Colonel Boucher just before the war. I quote from *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> *England and Germany*, p. 379. This is an American book of very great acumen.

of the future in German eyes. . . . The continual increases of the Russian Army were her greatest danger." <sup>1</sup>

We must remember that Washington and Jefferson did not allow their affection for the French people to obscure the fact that they were essentially martial. The former found himself forced during his presidency to clash with his recent Gallic allies, while a few years afterwards Jefferson, who both loved the French and hated the English, when he heard that the mouth of the Mississippi might pass into French hands, was alarmed in an unwonted degree. The love of the French for war was, he declared, too well known. If the mouth of the Mississippi should pass to a nation with such a temperament, "we must forthwith marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation."

Let us patiently examine the almost universal opinion of the German people that they fought a war of defence and despair. Von Tirpitz tells us that when the Kaiser was informed that war was certain, the man grew haggard. We are told by the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg that the German Ambassador, faced by the inflexible determination of the Russian Foreign Minister, "*completely broke down* on seeing that war was inevitable." This is hardly the attitude of insolent power. "*He appealed to M. Sazonoff* to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to the German Government as a last hope." <sup>2</sup> In Stockholm too we have a witness whose testimony is incidental and yet most natural. A few days before the guns were fired Nekludoff was in conversation with the various foreign representatives. It was the German Minister in whom he noticed "pallor and restrained emotion." <sup>3</sup> He does not say this of Viviani whom he saw there at the same time, and who expected war.

The distress of the German Chancellor in his last interview with the English Ambassador is too well known to be repeated. Here and there, of course, you can find the boast

<sup>1</sup> *Peaceless Europe*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *British White Paper*, 97. The French Ambassador also had a chat with the German Ambassador: "His hands trembled and his eyes filled with tears." Paléologue in *Revue des deux Mondes*, January 1921, p. 254, and yet we are assured that his confident country was setting out to conquer all Europe.

<sup>3</sup> Nekludoff (Russian Ambassador to Sweden) in *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, p. 291.



of some German military fool, but those who have read deeply know that embattled Germany was conscious of going to war at an unparalleled disadvantage both on sea and land and that the resources of her enemies were practically inexhaustible. The question is, did she seek that war?

The French have turned every circumstance to their advantage to hide their offensive behaviour that tended to provoke war. They point to the German declaration of war, but they say nothing of their own plan to strike Germany, if Germany and the vast empire of Russia should come to blows. They point to their enforced retreat before the German Army at the outset, but do not explain that they fell back because they had not been able to calculate exactly where the whole German Army would be launched; that their own Army was equal to the German, and that the Russian was still greater. The inferiority of the German is shown by the fact that as soon as the Russians moved into Prussia, the Germans had to withdraw forces from France to meet the mass on the East.<sup>1</sup>

*In every country of Europe the vocabulary of war is French.* Germany has had to defend herself during three hundred years in the language of her assailant.

It is astonishing how much sympathy they have created for themselves about Alsace-Lorraine, these delicate French. So many delightful masters have they of the arts of pathos and declamation that they have been persuading us not to regard them as the spoiled children of Europe. They have nice feelings if we may judge by their resentments.<sup>2</sup>

They have been persuading us too that they really did not want this war. They and the Russians have been distributing books called by the names of various colours in which I am sorry to perceive some important things happened, by sheer oversight, to be left out. For example, they left it to the Russian revolutionists to reveal what the Russian Ambassador Benckendorff, in a report from London to his Russian masters, wrote, in February 1913, when, a

<sup>1</sup> The immense odds that Hindenburg had to meet in August 1914 are discussed elsewhere. The German forces were clearly not enough for *offensive* operations on both fronts.

<sup>2</sup> "You have nice feelings, my lord, if we may judge by your resentments."—Junius.

year before the recent war began, an exactly similar crisis to that of 1914 arose in the Balkans. Benckendorff, who had lived a great deal both in London and in Paris and knew the French well, infinitely preferring them besides to the Germans, actually informs his Government that Germany had been the peaceful agent in settling the troubles of that season. He speaks of "Germany's pressure upon the extravagant Austrian Government. *If Germany wished war she would not have done so much in this matter.*"

But Benckendorff is not satisfied with admitting the German peace tendencies. He goes further and tells us about the belligerent tendencies of the French, even commenting upon the temper of Poincaré, President of France, of whom I shall have more to relate further on. Let us listen to what he says in this same report of his:

*When I recall Cambon's conversations with me, the words exchanged, and add the attitude of Poincaré, the thought comes to me as a conviction that of all the Powers France is the only one which, not to say that it wishes war, would yet look upon it without great regret.*<sup>1</sup>

And the Belgian Ambassador at Paris, Guillaume, tells his Home Office in February 1913 that the militaristic spirit of the French has been awakened by Poincaré. In April of the same year he tells his Minister of Foreign Affairs that Pichon and he have just had a talk, in which Pichon deplored the warlike spirit growing in Paris, where half the theatres were now playing Chauvinistic pieces. Finally on January 16, 1914, he says: "I have already had the honour to tell you that *it is MM. Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand, and their friends, who have invented and pursued the nationalistic and Chauvinistic policy which menaces the peace of Europe.* It is a danger for Europe and for Belgium.<sup>2</sup> The attitude of the Barthout Cabinet is in my judgment

<sup>1</sup> It was the rude Bolsheviks who revealed this and much similar correspondence, of which the Germans were able belatedly to avail themselves in the *German White Book* of 1919 on the responsibility for the war. See that paper, part 2, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Origins of the War*, issued since the foregoing was written, M. Poincaré does notice this damaging letter, though he ignores nearly all others. Not controverting it directly, he tells us that M. Guillaume was a "worthy man," who would have done well to keep his eyes open like Beyens, Belgian Ambassador at Berlin. Now Beyens in his book (*Germany*

the *determining cause of an excess of military tendencies in Germany.*"<sup>1</sup>

From great Frenchmen also come, as I have said, protests and accusations. That of Demartial we have already quoted. To his dissatisfaction may be added that of Henri Barbusse, of Anatole France, and of Erneste Renauld. This last-named historical writer engaged M. Poincaré in an argument by no means to the happiness of the latter. "*The Entente*," says Renauld, "*wanted the war as much as William II, and you, Mr. President, and your group of friends wanted it more than all,*" adding some painful shots at the French Yellow Book, of which I shall have more to say hereafter.

The alliance of France with Russia is something on which at the very outset both Britons and Americans have to receive much explanation. It was the most momentous in modern history, for from the date of that (1892) begins the recent war.<sup>2</sup> Do not let us deceive ourselves. When a wicked court like that of Petrograd had wound itself into the wealth of France, and when milliards of French money must be lost if Russia be lost, war had to come. France had made an alliance with scoundrels whose business was war, who could filch unlimited sums in the vast contracts of war, who had colossal fortunes to expect in the indemnities or the secret negotiations of successful war. And they were arranging the final details, the personnel of the assault, in good season as well as with a keen appetite, these Russians. Listen to the following in a circular which Sazonoff sent to his Russian diplomats, "*When the critical moment in international relations arrives*, it would be most desirable to have at the head of the Allied Governments, if not *Poincaré himself*, at least a personality who has the same energetic char-

*Before the War*, p. 23) frankly says "the promise which the Kaiser had made to the people when he ascended the throne as to keeping the peace he kept for twenty-five years," see *post*, p. 105.

<sup>1</sup> *Diplomacy Revealed*, p. 280. Of course, this friendly ambassador adds, like a good diplomatist, the usual saving clause that he really does not believe that France will be ill-behaved, etc. *Diplomacy Revealed* is the annotated London compilation of the correspondence seized by the Germans in Belgium. Gaps in it have not been explained, but the genuineness of no single document has been challenged.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Rosen concedes this in his very recent memoirs. *Saturday Evening Post*, June 5 and 26, 1920.

acter and *who has as little fear of responsibility* as the present French Prime Minister.”<sup>1</sup>

As to the position of Germany between these two Powers, let us use our imagination. Were we not lately worried, we this powerful people on a vast continent with all the resources of life inside our own boundaries, because England and Japan were in alliance? One on each side of us, we would say to ourselves with anxiety! Imagine, then, what we would have felt if the soil of England touched our Atlantic coast and the soil of Japan touched our Pacific coast, while both these countries were completely armed and at times insolently rejoiced in their common understanding.

Mr. Lloyd George stated the German situation fairly only five months before the war:

*The German Army is vital not merely to the existence of the German Empire but to the very life and independence of the nation itself, surrounded as Germany is by other nations each of which possesses arms about as powerful as her own. We forget that, while we insist upon a sixty per cent. superiority (so far as our naval strength is concerned) over Germany being essential to guaranteeing the integrity of our own shores, Germany herself has nothing like that superiority over France alone, and she has, of course, in addition, to reckon with Russia on her Eastern frontier. Germany has nothing which approximates to a two-power standard. She has therefore become alarmed by recent events, and is spending huge sums of money on the expansion of her military resources.*<sup>2</sup>

“Alarmed at recent events”? Naturally. Russia had at last the greatest standing army ever known on earth, *threefold that of Germany*, and was clamouring that France increase also an army greater than to that of Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The truth is both France and Russia had become intoxicated with their enormous armaments which they knew it

<sup>1</sup> Sazonoff, Russian Foreign Minister, after one of Poincaré's visits, August 1912. *Entente Diplomacy*, pp. 652-5. Poincaré has been vigorously attacked by Gouthenoire de Toury in *Poincaré a-t-il voulu la Guerre?* De Toury dates the warlike course of the President from the day of his going into office early in 1912. The great French work of Alfred Pevet is equally severe on Poincaré.

<sup>2</sup> *Daily Chronicle* of January 1, 1914. Shortly after the war began this statesman denounced the Germans as conspirators. Later he frankly admitted that nobody in particular had been in fault, that they “all stumbled” into the conflict. He had learned facts.

<sup>3</sup> See the chapters entitled “The Crisis,” and “Allied Preparedness.”



was impossible for Germany to compete with against combined populations so overwhelming. They began to grow noisy in their impatience, confident in united strength. They knew that they possessed the greatest armies in Europe for joint action and that the standing army of Russia was much the largest in the world. Nor was that army unequipped. The contrary is true. The first Russian armies were well equipped.

Fancy, then, a semi-official paper like the *Birshewija Wjedomosti*<sup>1</sup> of Petrograd stating, on June 13, 1914, a date which was of course before the tragic affair at Serajevo, "Russia is ready and hopes that France is ready." But who was threatening Russia at all? It goes on to state that the Russian Army has now 2,320,000 men. France must keep hers up too. Why? And what was already the latter's? "Greater in all the principal units than that of Germany," says General Buat. Without assistance from Belgium, a standing army of 910,000.<sup>2</sup>

The mischief-making Russian paper continues: "We have, moreover, carried through a great reform. We have projected and begun to build a whole network of strategic railways to concentrate the army as quickly as possible."<sup>3</sup>

Imagine the effect of such language upon a smaller population, some of whose principal cities were distant but the march of a day or two. Imagine a standing army of more than two million Japanese at Toronto or Montreal. Would New York be calm? Especially if there were about 800,000 fine hostile troops on the south? And then, how immense are our distances compared to those of Europe!<sup>4</sup> Would

<sup>1</sup> *Bourse Gazette*. Baron Rosen admits that this journal was semi-official and that the article was inspired by "the irresponsible recklessness" of Sukhomlinoff, Minister of War.

<sup>2</sup> See the surprising figures in Chapter X from his *L'Armée Allemande pendant la guerre*.

<sup>3</sup> The article is quoted more at length in Chapter XIII. See also Appendix G. As to the Russian Army, Joffre visiting Russia in 1913 pronounced their force "the mightiest army in the world." Appendix G.

<sup>4</sup> So plain to Germans had the intention of Russia to attack them become that their apprehension was said to be a reason why they must have hurried the war and provoked it, but the facts in Chapter XII will not bear this out. It might with as much justice be said that the French hurried the war because the opposition there to the three-year military service was growing beyond control in 1914.

London be calm with a French army of that size in Scotland even in times of peace? <sup>1</sup>

The Belgian Minister at Paris also informs his Home Office that the warlike spirit of the French arises from their confidence in the revision of the army.<sup>2</sup> It was in this confidence that the President Poincaré felt he could talk noisily of foreign policy to a banquet of eighteen hundred persons at Nantes in October 1912, a speech which, coming from the President of France, had a disquieting effect on Europe.

It is no wonder that the Russian Ambassador at Berlin advises Sazonoff that the Germans are beginning to regret with bitterness this state of things, and are pointing to France as the one "guilty of any future armed conflicts."<sup>3</sup> As early as 1912 the Russian Ambassador at London, in writing to his Home Office, felicitates his chief on the "mighty navy" which Russia would have in a few years.<sup>4</sup>

Nobody was more confident in the situation, nobody more full of assurance, than M. Poincaré. Sazonoff was right when he spoke of him as having no fear of responsibility. Not for a moment did Poincaré even pretend, at the outset of the war, that France was unprepared. On the contrary, in his address of August 4th, after the German declaration of war, he exultingly assured the extra session of the French Parliament that "France was watching, as alert as she is peaceful. She was prepared, and our enemy will meet on their path our valiant troops."<sup>5</sup>

I cannot refrain from giving at this time more of these surprising communications, for they have been only lately revealed, most of them, and they come indeed as a rude awakening to many good people who believed not only that France was unprepared, but that she was merely a parti-

<sup>1</sup> The confidence of the French war department even in 1912 was expressly communicated to St. Petersburg by the Russian Ambassador. Russia and France they were sure would take care of themselves. *Livre Noir*, p. 326.

<sup>2</sup> *Dip. Rev.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ent. Dip.*, p. 671. This book is a compilation of more than eight hundred communications between Russian diplomats and St. Petersburg. They were given to the world in 1921 by de Siebert, former Russian *chargé d'affaires* at London, and have been printed in Berlin and in the United States late in 1921. Sazonoff has had to admit their genuineness. See *L'Humanité*, January 28, 1922, and *Kölnische Zeitung* of January 26th.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 650.

<sup>5</sup> *French Yellow Book*, 158.

cipant through the necessity of her alliance with Russia or by the German invasion.

Baron Beyens, the Belgian Minister at Berlin, complains to his Home Office about these French inflammatory discourses, which place little Belgium in so dangerous a position.

At the head of the grumblers is M. Tardieu, the political editor of *Le Temps*, who omits no opportunity of attacking Germany's policy and all those who are trying to bring about the *rapprochement* between the two countries.<sup>1</sup>

And as late as April 24th of 1914 he tells his Home Office of a conversation with the French Minister, Jules Cambon. The latter, he says, sees the hand of Isvolsky in the Russian and French newspapers, and is hoping that this intriguing diplomat may soon be sent to represent the Tsar at London.<sup>2</sup>

And Baron Guillaume, the Belgian Ambassador at Paris, writes to his Home Office on the 8th of May as follows :

There is no doubt that the French nation has become more Chauvinistic and self-assured during the last few months. Those who two years ago expressed fears on the bare mention of possible difficulties between France and Germany have now changed their tone, are proclaiming the certainty of victory, lay great stress on the improvements in the French Army, which is true enough, and declare themselves sure of being able to hold the German Army in check long enough to allow Russia to mobilize, concentrate her forces, and throw herself on her Western frontier.<sup>3</sup>

I ask again what must have been the effect upon a country like Germany, so exposed to invasion by an overwhelming army. The Russian Ambassador at Berlin will tell us how the Germans felt on March 12, 1914 :

The growing military strength of Russia is causing even more serious anxiety in Berlin. In the opinion of German Government circles the new heavy siege artillery in Russia will be finished in 1916, and from that moment Russia will step into the field as a most formidable foe with whom Germany will have to cross arms.<sup>4</sup>

He adds that Germany is straining every nerve and in

<sup>1</sup> *Dip. Rev.*, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>4</sup> *Ent. Dip.*, p. 711.

his opinion is *trying to appear not afraid*, and that the German fear of Russia is general.

They had been working together even on the details of their plans, the French and the Russians, for several years. The Russian Ambassador at Paris advises his Home Office, October 11, 1911, that he has talked to Barere of late on that subject and has been informed of the latest plans that the French General Staff were working out, the technical details of which he "presumes are already known at Petrograd."<sup>1</sup> Even when the French cleared up matters with Germany concerning Morocco in 1911 they went on with preparations for war and kept the Russians well advised. "I know from a sure source," reports Isvolsky in February 1912, "that in spite of the happy adjustment of the Morocco crisis, the war department continues active preparations for military operations in the near future."<sup>2</sup>

At times the Russians found an obstacle in Paris, as when for instance the Premier was Caillaux. Then they reported the outlook as depressing, but it was not depressing upon the appearance of M. Poincaré, with whom, on September 12, 1912, Isvolsky reports a conversation. The faithful Poincaré assured him of the French loyalty to the Tsar in these terms:

If a conflict with Austria should involve Germany's armed intervention, France will at once recognize it as a *casus fœderis* and will not lose a minute in fulfilling her pledges to Russia.<sup>3</sup>

Then Sazonoff<sup>4</sup> in the same month made his famous visit to England where, in a confidential chat with Grey, he informed him of the Russian naval agreement with France, under which agreement the French fleet would look after Russian interests in the Mediterranean. He asked if England would do Russia the same service in the North by keeping the German fleet off the Russian coasts in the Baltic. Grey

<sup>1</sup> *Ent. Dip.*, p. 607.

<sup>2</sup> "Le département de la guerre continue à le préparer activement à des opérations militaires dans un proche avenir," Isvolsky from Paris, February 15, 1912, *Un Livre Noir*, p. 194. The Librairie du Travail is publishing a very exhaustive collection of the Russian files, many documents from which are not in the de Siebert book. They humorously call it "The Black Book." The second volume is not yet issued.

<sup>3</sup> Revealed in the Russian *Pravda* in the summer of 1919.

<sup>4</sup> Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.



replied without hesitation that "England would do everything to inflict the heaviest blow on German power."<sup>1</sup>

We look at each other in astonishment at some of these revelations, so deeply was it our belief that this war was a sudden blow at nations utterly unprepared. More surprises have to follow, one of which is that of the three great powers, *Germany was actually the least prepared*.<sup>2</sup> In a word, our misinformation was universal, fundamental, complete.

But there is one comfort left us. The English are the least vindictive of nations. A war finished successfully is to them a war forgotten. The most practical and unemotional of races unfailingly seeks, after the peril is past, the real truth of its own record and what may be said for the other side. No less a person than Lloyd George has generously summed up the international mistakes which brought about this war: "The more one reads memoirs and books written in the various countries of what happened before August 1, 1914, the more one realizes that no one at the head of affairs quite meant war. It was something into which they glided, or rather staggered and stumbled."<sup>3</sup>

Just before the war Sir Thomas Barclay, whose negotiations with France over the Moroccan question had given so much satisfaction to his countrymen, told us:

Wedged in between France and Russia, with England dominating all her issues to the outer world, her frontiers open to all the political winds that blow, Germany has a geographical position which forces her statesmen to listen with an anxious ear to any movements, projects or combinations of her neighbours.<sup>4</sup>

It is pleasant to quote another just Briton upon the geographical peril of Germany.

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda* revelations of 1919. There was, though, no naval alliance of England with Russia, and on just what situation Grey, if he said this at all, meant to act is not clear.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter X for the details.

<sup>3</sup> Addressing the Empire Parliamentary Association, December 23, 1920. Various utterances of this statesman on this question have been called contradictory. To me they do not appear so. In January before the war he told Englishmen frankly that Germany required and did not have an army proportioned to her geographical insecurity. After the war began he was persuaded that German was guilty of conspiracy. This he said at a time when, so far as I can see, he had no knowledge of the English military collaboration and the extent of the Franco-Russian preparations. After the war he was among the first and most generous, knowing then as I think all the facts, to admit that Germany was not wholly to blame.

<sup>4</sup> *Thirty Years' Reminiscences*, p. 256 (April 1914).

We who live behind the ramparts of the sea know little (except in times of panic) of the fear that besets a state which has no natural frontiers and which has to reckon with three great rival empires on its borders.<sup>1</sup>

That vivacious writer and shrewd observer, Price Collier, who furnished us so entertaining a book upon England, reminds us that Germany, though in size a fourth less than our State of Texas, has to take care of 4,570 miles of frontier. "Let us be fair," he says, "and admit that if Japan were where Mexico is and Russia where Canada is, and Germany separated from us by a few hours' steaming, certain peace talkers would have been hanged long ago."<sup>2</sup>

Now, the restoration of Europe depends upon the question whether the guilt of bringing on this war was *solely* or only partly the guilt of Germany. That sixty millions of people in the heart of Europe will not pay the whole charge of this war as deliberate culprits without ultimate resistance is certain, if, as they contend, those who seek to collect the awful penalty are guilty, too, in part. Equally is it clear that if the people of the Allied countries continue to think that the French Government was not at all in fault, they and their present Governments will insist upon every dollar imposed by a treaty signed for a nation in hunger. In the opinion of many wise men, this question is at the foundation of any enduring peace.

The reader, having already perused some things which apparently are not widely known in this country, may take a view of what I think will convince him that the Republic of France has also been to blame for the world catastrophe. I believe I can make plain:

First: That the alliance of France and Russia was unnecessary to the safety of France and was hostile to the peace of Europe, by its inviting into Western Europe an overwhelming mass led by irresponsible men who aimed at extending there an irresponsible government and a shameful despotism.

Second: That France deliberately and continually armed Russia and encouraged her aggressiveness against Germany;

<sup>1</sup> Rose's *Germany in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 16 (1902).

<sup>2</sup> *Germany and the Germans*, pp. 416, 424 (1913).

that French policy was continuously directed to creating a favourable opportunity for war upon Germany to regain her lost provinces, disintegrate Germany as she had kept her disintegrated in previous centuries, and resume her old place at the head of European affairs.

Third: That the German armaments were, beyond all question, made necessary by the enormous and wholly unnecessary increases in Russian armaments.

Fourth: That the Serbians were among the most infamous people in Europe, that Russia had no regard for Serbia other than to extend her own empire into the Balkans, and that Russia desired to break up, through Serbia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a result that would have left Germany helpless against Russia later.

Fifth: That the war sprang out of Russian ambition in the Balkans and in nothing vital to the French whatsoever, and that France could have stopped Russia at the outset by telling her that she would not support her Balkan ambitions, because Russia would not have gone into the war unless supported by France, which country immediately advised her that she would support her.

Sixth: That Germany did everything possible to avert the war after discovering that Russia actually would go to war and France support Russian ambitions in the Balkans, the Chancellor imperatively and repeatedly requesting Austria to acquiesce, and the Kaiser personally imploring the Tsar to stop, and that England, though embarrassed by previous relations with the French and Russians, also exerted herself to prevent war, but that the French Government did nothing whatsoever to restrain Russia.

Seventh: That the Russians, finding themselves certain of French support and possibly of English support too, pushed, at first by stealth, and then openly a general mobilization; that they brought two millions of well-equipped troops toward the German frontier and refused, after reasonable notice from Germany, to stop the mobilization; that France and Russia knew that they could ultimately drive England into the war, because England could not risk the conquest of France by Germany under any circumstances, and that Italy would not aid Germany at all.

Eighth: That Russia wanted a war, that France knew that Russia wanted a war, and that the Government of Poincaré did all that was possible to lash up the people of France against Germany before the war because his Government believed that the combined forces of France and Russia, especially if aided by England, were invincible.

Ninth: That the French and Russians, neither of them surprised but on the contrary long prepared, went into the war at the height of their overwhelming strength, the French Army being alone equal to that of Germany and the fully equipped part of the Russian much larger.

Tenth: That if the war had ended successfully for Russia, the best part of Central Europe would have been absorbed by her; that France during the war actually made a secret treaty to that effect; that the Germans were compelled to resist with enormous loss the spread of the Slavs into Western Europe and have contributed to its protection; and that the English, compelled by sheer military necessity to save France from defeat, have suffered incalculably in life, trade and wealth.

Eleventh: That France should bear a part of the gross losses of Europe and proportionate reduction in her claims under the Treaty of Versailles to restore the economic balance of Europe.

Twelfth: That the policy of France ever since the peace has been such as must inevitably drive Germany into some combination with the Slavs, notwithstanding the hatred of the Germans for that race and their historic struggle against it during the last five centuries.

A single telegram from the French Government to the Russian would have prevented this war, a simple telegram warning Russia that France would not support her in a conflict concerning the Balkans when Russia herself was not attacked by the Central Powers, neither of which had even mobilized against her. Germany had not mobilized at all. One such message, I repeat, would have saved civilization its catastrophe, for the Russian Government at the outset had stated that it would not venture into this war unless "secure of the support of France."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *British White Paper*, 17.



## CHAPTER II

### THE REAL ROOT OF THE WAR

THE women of France having long refused to increase the race, the French national policy after 1871 should have changed. It did not change. France was determined through her wealth to be a power of the first rate by importing an inferior race into the conflicts of Western Europe. Rather than be a power of the second class, she dedicated Europe to blood by an alliance with Russia. Now that Russia has collapsed, France, to the infinite anxiety of Caucasian nations, is pursuing the same course to-day by organizing vast armies of blacks in Africa, a course so unjust to Europe and so cruel to the blacks, hauled to the cold North to be hacked in wars of which they cannot conceive the cause, that England rightfully opposes in France any form of navy that can protect the transport of negro armies across the Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup>

When we discuss the Russian alliance, it will be shown that France sought it not only without provocation from Germany, but after repeatedly repulsing friendly advances by the latter, and after the Kaiser had twice spared her when she was at his mercy.<sup>2</sup>

As to preventing the war, I began my inquiries in the belief that of the three members of the Triple Entente, England was chiefly at fault, but I am clear now that the fault of England was far the least. England at an early stage might possibly have prevented, but Russia and France were determined to

<sup>1</sup> So startling from a military aspect is the French enthusiasm for their African negroes that I have set out in Appendix F General Mangin's recent eulogium on their *social excellence* and *mental equality* with the whites. These ideas cannot be taken lightly. Mr. Ray Stannard Baker in the *New York Times* of February 12, 1922, has just thrown most interesting light on Clemenceau's violation, by private order to the secretaries, of a clear agreement with Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson that colonial blacks be used only for colonial defence. It is a case of startling bad faith. See Appendix F.

<sup>2</sup> See the chapter, "The Peace Record of the German Empire."

have a war. Once the latter powers were resolved on war, England could not stop them.

That the English Foreign Office counselled deeply with France before the war can of course be no longer denied by fair-minded men. Yet there was this difference between the French and the English policy, that the former was an active creation of combined attack on Germany whenever favourable occasion should arise. The English, though vigilant, were passive. Indeed, a very great body of the English were exceedingly cordial to Germany, with whom trade relations were vast and mutual.

But most important to be remembered is that, no matter whether England should wish war with Germany (and in my opinion only a few there desired that) France had the power to drag England in spite of herself into such a war. The fundamental truth must be borne in mind that England could not afford to see France conquered by Germany, any more than Germany could afford to see Austria conquered by Russia, whether the ally be right or wrong. This the French politicians knew. On this they counted. A more explicit arrangement they of course desired, and that was wisely denied them, but still they felt reasonably sure that England would have to support them in the long run. This Russia also exultingly felt.

*France, in my opinion, dragged England into this war.* We shall see how she armed Russia until the latter became as dangerous as she was unscrupulous ; how she forced Germany to arm against Russia ; how it became certain that Russia would some day assail Germany. In the latter event, France would gladly join Russia, and England would have to participate on the side of France. Grey's policy, consequently, though open to grave criticism, did not in my opinion change the ultimate result caused by the arming of Russia by France. The two latter powers would have their war with Germany sooner or later, aided by England if possible, but if not aided by her, then without her.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. Alfred Pevet concedes that France should have refused to mobilize. That writer says the war became "Europeanized" when France took that step. "By its mobilization, on which depended Germany's action in the West, the position of Belgium, *the final decision of England*, the attitude, present and future, of Italy and Roumania, Europeanized the war, made

As to the conferences between the English Foreign Office and France, these were subject to ratification by the English Parliament. The conferences indeed were secret, and when revealed on the eve of war, several members of the Cabinet, including Lord Morley, resigned. This question I discuss later.

So far as the English people were concerned, they were in a state of happy ignorance. The story of thoughtless Mr. Britling was a probable tale. All stood astounded in England because none knew of the tremendous military preparations of the three allies.<sup>1</sup>

The responsibility of England will be examined in a separate chapter.<sup>2</sup> To dwell upon it now is not necessary, for it is in France that the impartial student of these tragic events will find the beginning of the European catastrophe. Long did her intrigues, her love of revenge, and her baleful alliance with half-Asiatic Russia precede any contributions of England to the final animosities. It is France that created the situation which caused armament to follow armament, both on land and sea. It is France that disdained the voice of Tolstoi against this baleful union, France that shut her ears to the protests even of student bodies in Russia that ventured, at no small peril to themselves, to warn her against strengthening the hands of a despot.<sup>3</sup>

To France is due the excited appetite of the Vladimirs, the Cyrils and the Rasputins, vile creatures controlling millions of men and finding in war the certain, quick gratification of their lust for money. It was by war and not by peace that Russian depotism could exist.<sup>4</sup> Once possessed of a mortgage on the French Treasury, she could be stopped by no power through peace and persuasion, and after getting her first the dream of St. Petersburg a reality." *Les Responsables de la Guerre*, p. 453. I have insisted that France should at least have remonstrated against the Russian mobilization. I may be in a bargain to stand by a man in a quarrel, but should I not counsel him to avoid it?

<sup>1</sup> Recent books by Lord Haldane and Earl Loreburn, the former in the secret and the other not, have revealed relations contrary to the traditions of the English people.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter XIII.

<sup>3</sup> In Chapter VIII will be found considerable quotation from Tolstoi's remarkable pamphlet holding up this treaty to mockery and scorn.

<sup>4</sup> See Dr. Dillon's analysis of this inherent feature of the Russian political structure in Chapter VII. Russia was the natural enemy of every Western neighbour.

milliards from France she got in truth a mortgage on the rest.<sup>1</sup>

In fine, if it shall appear that France has after all been in whole or in part to blame for this horrible catastrophe, we are met by a question both present and practical. In what light shall her costs of war and her claims for indemnity be reviewed? Hitherto it has been assumed that she has not only not been to blame, but was assailed in spite of herself and contrary to every possible expectation.

In the final accounting, France must bear her share of the blame for this appalling war. Terrible was the day when she pledged her youth and threw open her Treasury to a Tsar of Russia. War on Germany by Russia was from that time a certainty. From that sad day the German military party possessed not only an excuse, but could boast of an obligation to arm. What would England, for instance, do if across the Scotch border there were one hundred and fifty million Irish, an independent nation, supplied from the Treasury of France? What would we do in the United States if there were a like number of Japanese on the Canadian border, supported even by no other Treasury than their own? Opposition to armament would be called treason. No Government could stand that should do less than prepare the highest force to face the possibility of war on two fronts.<sup>2</sup>

How little did we know, at the outbreak of the war, the real situation in Europe. I remember that, when I first mentioned to a friend the dangerous position of Germany between two great powers with no natural frontier, he did not immediately see what I meant.

This man had never thought of Russia as cause of worry to Germany. Not at all. A hundred and fifty millions of

<sup>1</sup> A sad but amusing story is told by Shelking, formerly secretary of the Russian embassy at Berlin. He relates that on the Russian collapse of 1905 Witte sent Kokowtsoff to Paris for further loans, where he met the violent opposition of Clemenceau, then Minister of the Interior. Kokowtsoff finally threatened to throw Russia into that bankruptcy which would achieve the ruin of the previous French investors. Clemenceau afterwards remarked to Shelking: "'This Kokowtsoff of yours is not a minister, he is a black-mailer of the first water,'" but," adds Shelking, "Clemenceau had to agree to the loan.'" *Recollections of a Russian Diplomat*, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> The Russian offer of disarmament through a Hague Conference is clearly proved to have been disingenuous, a trick. See Chapter V. Had Germany ever dismantled that wonderful war machine on the promises of Vladimirs, Sazonoffs and Sukhomlinoffs, she would have been lost indeed.



an utterly different race, a large part of them as near to Germany as New England is to New York, or Liverpool to London, why, what of that? A war on two fronts! Had the Germans been conjuring that up too? Yet after we ourselves went to war, this very man was fretfully anxious lest the Germans break through a wall of fire and steel, cross the Atlantic, and assail New York. In the same way during profound peace people on our Pacific Coast fret about every new Japanese keel, worry about the navy of a smaller power four thousand miles over the sea, and even persuade themselves that we should prepare against the landing of its infantry.

These people must at least consider the German proximity to Russia and how we should regard a standing army of several millions on the other side of the Canadian border, absolutely subject to the orders of a despot, who could fling them into the bosom of our country without other authority than his own, with perfect secrecy until time for action, or even without so much as a parliamentary vote of supplies.

To-day, three years after the overthrow of her enemies, France justifies her keeping up a powerful army, the largest ever maintained by either France or Germany in a time of peace, through fear of Russia which, she tells us, may yet assail her over a disarmed Germany, tells us of her fears of distant Russia, fallen, stricken Russia, of Russia without a transportation system, of Russia exhausted by years of war. If France really thought a substantial army still necessary after the disarmament of Germany, 250,000 would surely have been ample considering that she had millions of seasoned soldiers in reserve, and a complete machine, which Germany no longer had, to call them into action. Besides, she would have the instant application of the blockade again by England to Germany.

In the words of Lord Loreburn: "There can be no question that the Franco-Russian Alliance caused great uneasiness in Berlin, as it naturally should, for the besetting apprehension of German Governments had been a combination against them of France and Russia. The German people have always dreaded it."<sup>1</sup>

Is no account to be taken of what Germany feared from

<sup>1</sup> *How the War Came.*

Russia in her strength, Russia armed with the treasure of France, Russia separated from Germany only by a few miles of open plain, Russia hostile to Germany and in alliance with France?

For my own part, with no kindly remembrance of the arrogant martinets who strutted in the Friedrichstrasse or Unter den Linden, I have coolly reflected on the conditions that brought them into existence and caused their own people to tolerate them, until I have no doubt from the perusal of innumerable books and documents that had this war not occurred in 1914, it would have occurred within two years more from the determined policy of the Russian court.

The Franco-Russian Alliance was formed in 1892, when to the immemorial dislike of the Russian people for the Germans was added a growing conflict in the policies of their Governments. It was celebrated with offensive pomp both in Russia and in France, with such unparalleled festivities<sup>1</sup> as characterized no other alliance between nations and as conveyed without mistake to the people of Germany the ill meaning behind it. Russia was determined to have the Dardanelles and so much of Germany on the Baltic as she could obtain.<sup>2</sup> France was to be again a leader among nations, even if Europe were to be deluged in blood.

Since in the twenty-one years that preceded that alliance not one provocation had been given France by Germany, and both Holland and Denmark, whose territories would be of infinite value to Germany, had continued safe beside her during long years without support from a half barbarous host pressing on Germany from behind, we may ask, why did France seek such an alliance? In that deplorable union will be found the beginnings of the recent war. Russia insatiably expanding westward at last found an associate behind the wall; the Vladimirs, the rotten Cyrils discovered treasure indeed to wallow in, fattening themselves and preparing their armies for war.

The French, says a popular American professor of history, "have been ready for a war with Germany whenever they

<sup>1</sup> See Tolstoi's account of these revels in Chapter VIII.

<sup>2</sup> How much Russia expected in 1892 is not exactly clear. However, she lived in a succession of wars, and in 1916 made plain to her partner her terrible demands in Western territory. See *The Secret Treaties*, Appendix D.

saw a chance for the last forty years.”<sup>1</sup> This fact, perfectly obvious to every well-informed traveller, seems not to be in the mind of that numerous class among us who during the recent war have so often had upon their lips a certain little sentence, always uttered in exactly the same number of syllables: “Germany, you know, has been preparing for this war for forty years.” With the truth of this last exclamation nobody can quarrel, for Germany was always prepared and existed as a nation only because she was always prepared. The provoking thing is that nobody considers that France and Russia too were also thoroughly preparing during many years indeed before this war, and were actually better prepared than Germany when the war broke out.<sup>2</sup>

Let us ask ourselves again how France behaved herself after the humiliation which, by the unanimous voice of historians, she brought on herself in 1870.

No longer increasing her population, France should have composed herself like Holland, like Denmark, and like Sweden, to a modest position in the world's affairs. Those states had once been great, proud and strong, but when they fell from eminence they did not fall to degradation. These wiser peoples resolved on husbanding their blood; they counted upon retaining their national boundaries by skilfully avoiding in future the irritating of their neighbours. To be sure, it is no pleasant thing for a nation to come down in its way of living, just as it is unpleasant for an individual to drop the company of the rich, but as self-respecting men prefer plain living to living beyond their means, so Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, self-respecting, law-abiding nations, assumed the simpler station, have been happy, and have not been despoiled.<sup>3</sup>

But the simpler station among nations would never be sufficient for Frenchmen. The incorrigible activity of her public men, their love of the military French past, their exultation in driving along boulevards which take their names

<sup>1</sup> Albert Hart in *The War in Europe*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> See the chapter on “Allied Preparedness.”

<sup>3</sup> I do not overlook here the Schleswig-Holstein affair of 1864. Nobody claims that Prussia was there wholly in the wrong, for a large part of the population was German, preferred German rule, and has been allotted to Germany even by the recent adjustment during the war. It seems to me that Dr. Dernburg's explanation of this affair in the *New York Times* of October 5, 1914, is conclusive.

from the humiliation of outside nations, all combined to make the rational course of peace and simplicity impossible. France must again be queen of nations.

War in Europe became from the day of the alliance of France with Russia a certainty. The only question was, how long could it be deferred? Germany must forthwith increase her armaments in self defence, increase proportionately the general uneasiness, and cause a counter increment in the arms of other powers. No man in his senses can doubt, who has read the history of Russia, that she would sooner or later have a war of conquest against Germany, and France it is clear would rejoice at the opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

Children may believe otherwise. Those who think that because France has a multitude of thrifty and peaceful farmers she speaks with the voice of the peasantry on foreign policies, may be credulous, but those who know her international career will not be trustful. The latter will think of Bonaparte, of Louis Napoleon, and of Boulanger, suppressed only through fear of Germany. They will think of Gambetta's maxim that France should always think of 1870 and never mention it. They will think of the statue of Strasbourg in the Place de la Concorde covered with perpetual mourning to blow the zeal of fiery striplings. They will think of the intriguing Delcassé, the kisses exchanged with the chief despot of the world, militarism gone mad in the perjuries against Dreyfus, the lenity shown to the murderer of the really great Jaurès, who was shot because he wanted peace. They will think of Caillaux, trampled on because he, too, wanted peace.

Equally will thoughtful men recall the humour of French politicians, the striking temperamental difference between the intellectual and the working classes. In no other country is this difference so marked. In England, in our own country, the same degree of prudence and self control appears in the governing classes as in the multitude. The Roman *gravitas* pervades Englishmen from the public commons to the Houses of Parliament, the deliberateness of a race accustomed and fit to rule.<sup>2</sup> Our own representative bodies are equally a just

<sup>1</sup> To quote Professor Hart again, "Every Power in Europe knew that if Russia went to war with Germany, France would attack on the West."

<sup>2</sup> Even Ireland to-day appears absolved from Macaulay's "reproachfully pointed at by all who either feared or envied the greatness of England."



average of the prevailing common sense, of a temper quicker indeed than that of Britons, but of a people who have a contempt for hasty action in high place.

Of this calmness in government the French have little. Either of two things is true ; the French are very subject to emotional appeal or they leave their government to men who are vain, jealous, and inconstant. To an Englishman the French Parliament is an intellectual mob.

The French Republic has been tried the last forty years under circumstances exceedingly favourable, under popular though unjustified apprehension of Germany. This apprehension has imposed self restraint upon French politicians. The shadow of the German eagle, they exclaim in those beautiful rhetorical phrases of theirs, has been over them these forty years, but are we quite sure that the fear of the German eagle has not been a good thing for France ? May not the Republic have grown more solid under that fear, even though their own contentious disposition increased the apprehension ?

How long did the Republic last under Bonaparte ? As soon as Bonaparte could win foreign victories the French fell to adoring him and rejoiced in the *emperor*. When did France settle down to the arts of peace ? Only when all Europe in her rage had crushed her lying and invading Bonaparte. But what did France do with her next Republic, France, the lover of liberty ? Within a year or two after she had entrusted the adventurer Louis Napoleon with the title of President she again surrendered the republic to a tyrant and adored the *emperor* who repeatedly came back from successful invasions. It was the terrible right arm of outraged Germany that restored France to sanity under that wanton prince. But did France even then settle down to actual peace and recognize her true situation ? No.

Consider the true temper of French politicians, their vanity in oration, their love of the dramatic, their petulance in high place, the sudden resignation after flights of patriotic declamation, the hysterical accusation, the frenzied reply. Consider that the average life of a French cabinet has been since the foundations of the Republic little more than a single year.

Consider their screaming Press, of which one journal charges another with accepting bribes from foreign Powers,

while all assail public men with catlike ferocity and with shameful tales of private or public dishonour. The French Press, it is proper to observe, has none of that partial independence which ours has from advertisements. It depends on an immense and yet not very profitable circulation to begin with, and then chiefly on subsidies from financial sources, notably from such syndicates as the Financial Publicity Syndicate, which floats, with some Government encouragement, the loans of friendly foreign powers. In the Caillaux trial, the extent of these subsidies was terribly exposed. It is a vicious Press, that of Paris.<sup>1</sup>

For example, in the month of November 1921 the British Government was compelled to ask France, upon whose soil so much English blood was poured out for her safety, to restrain her journals from continuous derision and contempt of the Government of England.

I mention again the venality and vicious temper of the French Press, because in popular government newspapers have a particularly dangerous power, and the uses that they could be put to by Russian agents in Paris are most obvious. Indeed, we are not without proof of such activities.

The Russian Ambassador assures his Government in July 1912 that his "energetic personal influence on the principal French newspapers" has had a desired effect. In August of the same year the Russian *chargé d'affaires*, worried about an article in the *Echo de Paris*, contrived to have the thing corrected in an invented despatch from London through the Havas Agency.<sup>2</sup> When the Credit Lyonnais desired to make a loan to Buda-Pesth, the Russian Ambassador found a way to stop it.<sup>3</sup>

The vigilant Russians had also a Chief of Police for France, who in a report of May 1914 says he was able to forestall adjustment of a dispute among the stockholders of the Austrian Southern Railway by an article in the *Echo de Paris*, and that

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult for Americans to realize of what vilification they are capable. Terrible charges are made on mere suspicion and without proof whatsoever. Frenchmen often assert that, if it had not been for England, France would have been the supreme influence in the world. Those who think that had best compare the temper of Paris with that of London, or ask themselves why the French newspapers, the best of them, are utterly inferior to the wonderful dailies of England.

<sup>2</sup> *Ent. Dip.*, pp. 651-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 310-11.

when Austrian bankers hoped to get a holding in a new Serbian railway, it sufficed for Russia to have it noised about that the Russian group would not participate. This gentleman adds in his information to his principals that "We must establish a rule that we are not to leave France alone with the Austrians in any question in any country where we have an interest."<sup>1</sup>

Nor were the Russians satisfied with casual attention to the Press. They had some journals on their régular list. For instance, the Russian Foreign Office advises Isvolsky at Paris on August 29, 1916, that *Le Temps*, already in the pay of the Tsar, wanted 150,000 francs a year. "The paper is already indirectly subsidized by our Minister of Finance and the telegraphic expenses of its Petrograd correspondent are paid by us."<sup>2</sup>

Never did the indefatigable Isvolsky leave the Paris Press unfed; their wants were ever on his mind.

I have established very good relations with the serious organs, which has been of great assistance to me in the immediate instance, but it is necessary to have in critical moments means to influence rapidly the hungry pack of little ones.<sup>3</sup>

And a little later he advises the vigilant Sazonoff that while he himself was succeeding in keeping the public from "false impressions" by personal exertions on the Press, "Poincaré was taking similar steps and naturally more effectual ones."<sup>4</sup> But this corrupt minister gives us information still more surprising. Referring to the Press again he says:

As you know, I don't myself get into the distribution of subsidies, but this distribution, in which the French ministers take part (the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Finance) is, as it would seem, efficacious and accomplishes its purpose. For my own part, I try in every way to influence the more important Paris journals like *Le Temps*, *Journal des Débats*, *Echo de Paris*, etc.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ent. Dip.*, p. 313.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by the New York *Nation*, October 12, 1921, as revealed by *L'Humanité* of August 6, 1921. *Le Temps* was M. Tardieu's paper.

<sup>3</sup> Isvolsky from Paris, May 23, 1912, *Livre Noir*, p. 259.

<sup>4</sup> July 18, 1912; *ibid.*, p. 300. "En même temps Poincaré faisait des démarches analogues et naturellement plus efficaces."

<sup>5</sup> December 18, 1912; *ibid.*, p. 371. He adds: "En somme, la presse parisienne d'aujourd'hui ne saurait être comparée à celle de 1908-9; je dois surtout signaler l'attitude du *Temps*, qui se distinguait, il y a quatre ans, par ses tendances austrophiles."

I pray God that never shall an American Chief of Staff have to state his country's military position as gloomily as Von Moltke in December 1912, surrounded on every side and under the accumulating shadow of war.<sup>1</sup> Italy will clearly not assist. He has so been told by the Italian Chief of Staff, and the promised Italian Third Army that was so much counted upon will not be available. Italy will hesitate, ultimately drop out. As for France, she can put into the field even a larger infantry than that of Germany.<sup>2</sup> The only German superiority is in heavy artillery. The Russian Army already grossly exceeds the German, is constantly being increased, and cannot be equalled by German conscription. On the seas England will be a certain adversary. This memorandum of Von Moltke's is a simple, eloquent refutation of the popular belief that Germany was overwhelmingly armed by military chiefs planning triumphant and easy conquest. The language is the bare diction with which great commanders have expressed themselves from the time of Cæsar, no rhetoric, no argument, nothing but a cold statement of appalling odds, as to which he merely adds: "We do not approach our heavy task with confidence."

Moltke's report was prepared under what appeared the certainty of war with Russia in 1913 through the Balkan conflicts. There were brutes, doubtless, at Potsdam, and numbers of boastful men in uniform, but neither fools nor blockheads were in command.

Far be it from me, in anything that I may say in this book, to underrate the true character of the French people. They are in my opinion the most intellectual in Europe. To the versatility of the Italians they add a patience almost German in research and all their contributions to human knowledge they illumine with sentiment and imagination. Every department of learning they have successfully explored. Their deep scholarship accompanies their exquisite art. Nor has any

<sup>1</sup> See his secret report in Document No. 23 of Ludendorff's *The General Staff and its Problems*, vol. i, p. 57. I have set out most of it as Appendix A. That it stated the truth is known now by everything that happened.

<sup>2</sup> Owing to her drafting a wider range of years and at times using the three-year service France alone actually had at the beginning of the war an infantry larger than that of Germany. See the frank statements of General Buat and the standard statistics in my chapter on "Allied Preparedness."



race exceeded them in flinging from the human mind whatever weights have been hung upon it by religious bigotry or political tyranny.

The French literature is probably the richest in the world. Lacking to be sure, such sublimities as Homer, Dante, Goethe, and Shakespeare, and a genius so original as Swift, it nevertheless exceeds every other, ancient or modern, in variety of excellence. France first brought the culture of Greece and Italy to the West of Europe, and is to-day the last refuge of polite literature. With what delight do we peruse the Mérimées, Montesquiues, Daudets, Lamartines, Fénelons, Pascals, and Sainte-Beuves of France! Where can we find in our own tongue an eloquent Rousseau, a melodious Chateaubriand, the versatile, the trenchant, the sparkling Voltaire? And yet I have said nothing of that glorious line of writers in comedy from Molière to Labiche. To me France has always been a country of romance, always what their old Du Bellay called "*France mère des arts, des armes et des lois.*"

But all this does not blind me to the history of France, its continual wars, its fretfulness in prosperous mediocrity, its immediate abuse of power on acquiring it, its intolerable habit of committing its government to impassioned orators and to men of characters not substantial.<sup>1</sup>

The beauty of the French writers, their great number, and the fact that five of us speak or read French to one who speaks or reads German, have enabled them to appeal continuously and disingenuously to the consideration of the world in many circumstances where they have been gravely in error.

Let me illustrate. The fertile Tardieu prefaces his book, *The Truth about the Treaty*, with a short sketch of France since the year 1870. It is impossible not to comment on the heroism which he attributes to France while she lived under the mere superiority of Germany. With all his ingenuity he cannot cite one circumstance of real hardship on his people before the recent war. Yet he says France "nobly endured" the

<sup>1</sup> We Americans are credited with being somewhat emotional, but the man has never risen among us who with the name of "The Tiger" could possibly get a high place in our Government. Indeed, our country has always rejected great orators: Webster, Clay, Blaine, and Bryan. I may add in much severer reproach, no man could rise to great heights in this country who could boast of having driven the name of God out of the public schools.

situation. Nobly endured what? It was a prosperous country growing all the time in her colonies and accumulating great wealth. What stronger phrase could M. Tardieu use if his country had actually had fresh provinces wrested from it, its citizens stolen away, its ships sunk at sea? What France was nobly enduring was her own discontent at not being again one of the great powers of the world, her discontent at seeing great nations consult without considering it necessary to submit their plans to a Louis Napoleon or a Napoleon Bonaparte. The Germans did not even forbid France in 1871 to maintain again as large an army as she might desire, a prohibition which all Europe then would have gladly seen imposed upon a country of continual wars.<sup>1</sup>

And Tardieu is perfectly disingenuous in his way of stating the French case. He leaves out, for instance, what he himself has admitted in another book,<sup>2</sup> that the German Kaiser, in his earlier years, did everything he could to be in friendship with France, a fact sufficiently well attested for that matter by other writers. Most remarkable of all, Tardieu actually mentions the collapse of Russia in 1905, and complains of the Kaiser's immediately speaking his mind about the celebrated Moroccan affair. This writer boldly mentions the Moroccan Treaty, which it has now been proved beyond all debate was a deceitful performance on the part of M. Delcassé, who in the same day made two treaties, one public and one private, the latter giving the lie to the former and the former only being exhibited to the German Government.<sup>3</sup>

Instead of allowing the Kaiser some praise for his having spared France while the rest of the world expected him in the helplessness of Russia to punish her, he actually mentions those circumstances in which he spared her while upbraiding him for uttering simple complaints against deceitful treatment.

<sup>1</sup> The French have complained so loudly of the "severity" of the indemnity of 1870, that we may add to the foregoing Nitti's remark that the Treaty of Frankfort was "humanitarian" compared with that of Versailles. It did not strip France of its colonies or its fleet or control of its transportation. *Peaceless Europe*, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> *France and the Alliances*, p. 151. This book, of course, was written long before the war. René Pinon, *France et Allemagne*, pp. 88, 89. The latter writer also concedes the vast expansion of France under her colonial policy deliberately encouraged by Bismarck, *ibid.*, p. 57. Yet he complains!

<sup>3</sup> *Morocco in Diplomacy* (sometimes entitled *Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy*). See my chapter "Morocco."



<sup>1</sup> But these Frenchmen have our ear and they will tell us of their grievances. They will tell them in language which we can scarcely resist. Those exquisite writers know how to bleat and to bleat most tunefully. The wrongs which their armies used to commit upon Europe they wholly forget, but let them receive one injury themselves and it is never forgotten. It is cast in immortal prose. As for M. Tardieu and his "nobly endured," if nations had nothing harder to endure than France had under Germany's forty-three years of peace, it would be well for mankind.

To French politicians it is plain that "the German question" was a useful thing, the advocate of *rapprochement* being always at a disadvantage against the ranting preacher of wrongs, and, as the Russian Army grew to gigantic size, it is noticeable that the fiery class of speakers was permitted to inflame the multitude in a way which public common sense in the earlier days forbade. Caillaux was right.<sup>1</sup> In 1914 had come again the situation of 1870. There was a French Government that wanted war with Germany. "For the Duc de Gramont substitute M. De Selves."

With what skill does French literary art beguile us to their side of every question! Since the Dreyfus scandal died down, we have heard nothing more of that. It is the Zabern incident of Prussian militarism that has been portrayed to us with so much animation. Yet in the whole history of Prussian militarism I doubt if one thing can be cited so terrible as the former persecution in a time of peace. Dreyfus, an innocent man, was conspired against by his fellow officers, whose perjuries were supported by a military clique. When these last were exposed and the sentence was sought to be reversed, nearly the whole French people, including the overwhelming bulk of the military circle, combined to oppose the reopening of the inquiry. "It is better that one innocent suffer than that the dishonour of army officers be exposed." To prove him falsely convicted by fellow officers was to dishonour the army.<sup>2</sup>

I repeat, it is reckless French public men and their desire to be again a great figure in the world that has brought on the

<sup>1</sup> *Mes Prisons*.

<sup>2</sup> The French people deserve praise for restoring Dreyfus to liberty, but after what difficulty and time was it achieved! The nation is deeply militaristic from sentiment and ancient glory.

late catastrophe. In the Morocco incident <sup>1</sup> Delcassé delighted in affronting Germany. The remonstrances of the latter Power, it will be remembered, were sufficient to cause his removal, since a great many public men in France believed he had been grossly imprudent. No sooner, though, did he reappear in French politics than he made the Chamber resound with his sneers at Germany, which was not attempting to crush, and, though it had the power at that particular time, did not crush his country. For the unreasonableness of his behaviour we have the testimony of a Belgian Minister who, noting the disagreeable effect at Berlin, remonstrates to his own Government against this dangerous and offensive talk. Baron Greindl says :

The speech bristles with illusions of a kind irritating to Germany. When has M. Delcassé found Germany attempting to impose her superiority upon the other nations of Europe ? We are her nearest neighbours, and in twenty years I have never perceived the least desire on the part of the Imperial Government to presume on its strength and our weakness. When has the tranquillity of Europe been menaced except by French dreams of revenge ? <sup>2</sup>

Here we have an impartial witness as to what it was that France was, in the language of M. Tardieu, " nobly enduring." The diligent people of France were really not conscious of enduring anything hard. They were happy. They were wonderfully prosperous. Why does this splendid race forever turn over its Government to factious journalists, literary dabblers, and men of fragrant volubility. M. Noir stabs a cabinet minister with a new adjective and becomes an officer of state. M. Blanc gets into a duel with M. Vert over an adverb. Those who retire from cabinets embark in journalism to assassinate their successors. They govern France to gratify their vanity.<sup>3</sup>

As M. Tardieu is in my opinion one of those responsible for the late war, I think some further comments may be

<sup>1</sup> See the chapter entitled " Morocco."

<sup>2</sup> *Dip. Rev.*

<sup>3</sup> Goldsmith in his *Traveller* allowed the French a happy disposition, which in one sense they have and another have not. In a pleasant way, one might rather apply to this remarkable people what Gibbon in his boyhood journey said of the ancient Romans: " I am convinced that there never, never existed such a nation, and I hope, for the happiness of mankind, there never will again." *Correspondence*, vol. i, p. 67.

appropriate upon his book, *The Truth about the Treaty*. The political editor of *Le Temps*, it seems to me, is in an unenviable position under the revelations of diplomatic documents that his journal was under subsidy from the Tsar, nor has he, I think, in some things shown himself grateful to our country. This would perhaps be an immaterial circumstance in the present discussion, were it not that every doctrine he is now supporting in his published utterances would lead to another war. He illustrates to my mind the militaristic tendency of the existing French Government. With all his flow of words, M. Tardieu has shown poor taste and little gratitude toward us. As late as 1921 he kept insisting that a promise had been made by President Wilson to waive the French debt to our country, insisting after repeated denials, until Secretary Houston had to use toward him in the public prints language equivalent to the lie.<sup>1</sup>

In his present long book he practically ignores both the English and American military assistance to France. He at least goes as far in that direction as delicacy permits him, and as to Woodrow Wilson, whose very smile he once was proud to receive and from whose presence, either at Washington or Paris, he would emerge briskly mysterious, he now reminds us that the Treaty of Versailles and the Armistice were not made by an "American dictator." There is not in his whole book one generous outburst of eloquence or anything more than tepid compliment toward a Briton or an American.

I may note that since he reminds us that this treaty was made by *France*, one cannot help observing that the French want only so much of it as is profitable to them. The rest they do not desire or obey, for instance, the exceedingly plain requirement in the covenant of the League of Nations that all treaties must be public and also filed with the Secretariat. Before the ink was dry on this bargain, France made an offensive and defensive alliance with Belgium, the terms of which she refused to disclose, in downright violation of her signature to the treaty. How much of the terms of the alliance

<sup>1</sup> "From start to finish of the Peace Conference, President Wilson and his advisers, without exception, opposed vigorously and finally any such suggestions or proposition of cancellation. The question in one form or another always arose. It was always 'stepped on' by the American delegation." *What Really Happened at Paris*, p. 289 (Mr. Lamont's portion).

has been extorted by the Secretariat to save appearances perhaps M. Tardieu can tell.

How much we can rely upon his statements or his arguments, we may judge from his treatment of well-known history. With the usual recklessness of a Parisian journalist, he repeats, for instance, Bismarck's "forgery" of the Ems telegram when nobody knows better than he that this legend (as the reader may easily see in Chapter IV of the present book) is utterly exploded both by French and English historians. He tells us that the frontiers of France have been wantonly violated twice in fifty years without saying that his Napoleon III declared the war of 1870 and hurried to invade Germany himself. In summing up the wrongs of France at the hands of Germany he is practically unable to mention one in the last fifty years, and concedes that in all diplomatic movements of the last quarter of a century, France has had the better of the manœuvre. Of the infinite wrongs done by France to Germany before the war of 1870, he is as silent as he is concerning the provocations given by France to Germany for that war, too.

Lloyd George, he is sure, is to blame because France got too little at Versailles. But he has at least the tact not to repeat the insinuation which he made in an earlier book<sup>1</sup> that England had a habit of stirring up wars on the Continent for an invariable profit to herself. My own recollection is that England continually had to intervene in Continental wars to save the Continent from the ambition of France. But perhaps this is not the reason why M. Tardieu does not repeat the unkind remarks in this respect which he made in a book written some years before the recent war.

But the great evil of this gentleman's book is its attempt to defy the infinitely superior arguments of the infinitely superior Keynes. M. Tardieu would exact from a country exhausted by four years of war and five of blockade what no great economist has ever said Germany could pay, what great economists have said she never can pay, and what her very attempts thus far to pay have brought Central Europe to an abyss, France aggravating the economic situation by a most expensive army of occupation, and the moral situa-

<sup>1</sup> *France and the Alliances*, p. 71.



tion by an unnecessary use of black-skinned troops over white Europeans.

Walking early one Sunday morning in the Avenue des Champs Élysées I approached, beneath chestnuts blooming in the mild air of spring, the most imposing square in Europe. All around me was peace, the silence broken only by the twittering of the birds and the distant bells that called the pious to prayer. There had been years without war, I reflected; surely the day of peace and common sense had come at last. But what was that which, as I came upon it suddenly, stopped my step and broke the pleasant dream? It was the Monument de Strasbourg, still draped in mourning after thirty years. A young French boy happening to pass it as I did, I pointed to the black wreaths. "*Oui, oui, Monsieur,*" he exclaimed, "*nous verrons, nous verrons.*" Yes, we have seen.

As I turned away, I said to myself, this is not peace.—Then something more came to my mind. There passed this monument yearly tens of thousands of travellers who, knowing little of history, were taking home and diffusing a sympathy with France. Nobody will be at the pains to educate these aright. Not one in twenty of them will ever know that Alsace-Lorraine was stolen from Germany by a French king to begin with, and that the Germans made no attempt to recover those provinces until another French monarch avowed a policy of preventing the union of the German States and until, upon the flimsiest pretext ever used, he actually declared war and ordered his armies to cross the Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Even the most audacious French propagandists shrink from justifying Louis Napoleon's war of 1870. The fluent Bainville, for instance, has to dodge the year 1870 almost entirely. With equal *delicatesse* does Bérard in *L'Eternelle Allemagne* steer his course around a shoal so dangerous.

But amid the swarm of infatuated partisans, hired pamphleteers and subsidized editors there has always arisen in France an uncontrollable voice of truth insisting upon the exposure of deceit. The reader who wishes to pursue details of what has been rapidly sketched in my preceding chapters, and is to be referred to again, may well peruse Dupin's *Considérations sur les Responsabilités* (Paris 1921), the *Bulletins Officiels de la Société d'études documentaires*. The printing of the Isvolsky correspondence (*Livre Noir*) was also a signal performance.

## CHAPTER III

### OUR ILLUSIONS AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR

IT was in the Tiergarten I think, only eight months before the Great War, that I saw last the German Emperor. William II was then at the height of that renown which had spread from the River Spree to the remotest fountains of the Yang-tze, a monarch happy amid a happy people, and able to look back upon a whole generation of Germans rejoicing under his rule in the fruits of security and peace.

In that monarch I beheld Germany fully knitted together after many unquiet ages, a spectacle, indeed, of grandeur. At the mere frown of one man, I said to myself, inexhaustible armies will pour into the field from the Baltic to the Rhine, while the fleets of England flock homeward in alarm from the four corners of the earth. Opposite his palace I could see the most inspiring monument ever reared by sentiment or power. In the centre of a colossal group the serene grandfather of this prince was led by smiling Peace, but below, at each angle of the pedestal, four mighty lions crouching upon the emblems of Victory and War bellowed to North and South and East and West the triumphs of Sadowa and Sedan, glorying in the fallen eagles of Austria, and warning the foes of Germany never to provoke again the furious paw that felled the Empire of France.

*Fuit Ilium et ingens gloria!* Can I without curiosity or emotion compare what I then was glad to see with what now the groans of nations compel me to behold? Is it possible that a mind fond of inquiry should not seek the original cause of a catastrophe so gigantic? Was this the work of one set of men? Of one people? Of one ambition? What was the Europe in which I was then travelling? A region in which one nation was armed while all the rest were peaceful?



No. Wherever I sojourned the gay uniforms went by, the manœuvre was preparing, the detestable cannon scowled. All the races, all were armed. In every country of Continental Europe youth was fed and drilled and praised and bullied in the devilish art of destruction.

But if Germany reminded me of power, equally did it remind me of peace. During forty-three years up to 1914 Germany alone of the Great Powers had not been at war, though she possessed throughout the whole of that period and up to 1913, the most powerful and mobile army in Europe. Nay, more, in 1902 and in 1905 Germany had deliberately spared France when her Russian ally was, according to universal military opinion, absolutely helpless.<sup>1</sup>

*It is a fair question to ask during what period in the last three hundred years the French Government has remained at peace with her neighbours while possessing the principal military strength in Europe.*

When, at the outbreak of the war, I sometimes suggested to my friends that all the Powers were equally prepared, they heard me with incredulity. Had not Germany suddenly belched into smiling Champagne a host masterfully equipped with every conceivable tool of battle? Was not the voice of Europe that of unexpected horror? Had we not the word of the Allies that the stroke came like a thunderbolt?

To-day, in the light of our new knowledge, one smiles at any pretence that the Allies were surprised. The truth we know at last. Governments have fallen, archives have suddenly been laid bare, memoirs are issuing, and the stern hand of the censor muzzles speech no longer.

That two great Russian armies, well equipped, began to enter East Prussia within a fortnight after the declaration of war; that preparations between France and Russia for simultaneous mobilization had long been complete; that France was to strike Germany with Russia and for Russia; that Russia had been prodigiously preparing every department of her army for attack, that with vast French loans she had been laying military railways to the German frontier; that by 1916 Russia would have had Germany, with the aid of France, at a terrible disadvantage; that England and

<sup>1</sup> See chapter on "The Peace Record of the German Empire."

France had been in actual military collaboration for no less than nine years, measuring through their general staffs, the very vales near the Belgian frontier ; that the fleet of England had been remodelled for battle and blockade against Germany a decade before ; that even the British colonial heads had been instructed to co-operate long, long in advance ; of all these things we Americans were ignorant. It is only now, as I shall narrate, that we know these facts, many of them through the present candour of English statesmen.

One day in Washington, chatting with the wife of a Frenchman of some rank, I congratulated her on the retreat of the Germans from the Marne, and added my felicitations that vast English armies were pouring into Northern France. She shrugged her shoulders : " We are not rid of them yet, you understand." I looked at her in amazement. " It is our problem—after the war," she continued. For my part I was trying to find some words other than those of irritation with which to continue the conversation, when her husband took a seat beside us.

" Your wife," I said to him, " has just put an idea in my head." Then I repeated her remark. Compressing his lips, he looked grave, and when she had moved off, leaving us alone, he whispered : " You understand that England is, of course, our friend to-day. We adore England. France is always grateful, but the war must end with a large part of our territory in English hands. It is a problem—a problem."

To the credit of the good people of France, be it said, I did not always hear this kind of comment from Frenchmen ; but I am sorry to say that I did afterwards hear it from others of their race.

That a single intelligent Frenchman, however, should make such a remark at such a time filled me with vexation. Then I fell to reflecting on the French character. What is the most notable characteristic of this able and peculiar people ? What does one notice most in the French when you have intercourse with them, when you deal with their shopkeepers, or when you find them describing their own manners in their unrivalled comedies ? In their extraordinarily able women a scepticism as to human

motives; in their men a sensitiveness, an undue quickness to feel themselves neglected, that indefatigable change of humour for which they have supplied our language with the word, pique. This last weakness is in an individual of no serious moment, but is big with the most terrible consequences in those who have the power to fling army corps into the field.

After the war there occurred in France a signal illustration of this prevailing trait.

To President Wilson more than to any one human being do the French owe our coming into the war. As for the multitude in this country, though not pro-German, it still voted for peace after the invasion of Belgium, after the horrifying incident of the *Lusitania*, and after all the real and exaggerated woes of the German invasion. A general feeling prevailed that we could never settle satisfactorily the quarrels of Europe. On an undeniable referendum of "He kept us out of war," our people gave President Wilson three million more votes in 1916 than they had given him in 1912, raising him from a President by minority to a President by majority.<sup>1</sup>

It was after this vote, following the most irritating acts of the Germans, that he gave Bernsdorff his passports. Moreover, in his first term he had submitted to undeniable wrongs from the Allies concerning mail and shipments abroad, and had let us continue in that respect at a disadvantage clearly useful to them.

Whether this famous man erred before or erred after the second election, one thing is clear, he was the last man in the world whom the French ought to have grown impatient

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wilson, whether or not he reflected the early sentiment of the country, said to Congress on December 8, 1914: "This is a war with which we have nothing to do," and on December 7, 1915: "We have stood apart studiously neutral. It was our manifest duty to do so." Even at the beginning of the canvass in 1916 he said: "No voice has ever kept coming to any public man more audibly, more unmistakably, than the voice of this great people has come to me, bearing the impressive lesson, We are counting upon you to keep this country out of war."

It is a sad truth that our President was, when we declared war upon Germany, in little better possession of the truth concerning its diplomatic origin than the rest of us. That he was ignorant of the secret treaties made during our neutrality is confessed, and of course he could have had not the remotest idea of what the Russian and even the Belgian archives were to reveal.

with. The best friend their country ever had was Woodrow Wilson. Now let us observe their patience.

Do we not all remember the indescribable fervour of the French toward Wilson when, after the Armistice, he first reached their shores? All the adjectives of Voltaire and Victor Hugo were exhausted in his praise; since the beginning of the world there had been no other such man.

Unhappily our President felt under some obligations to allow the Germans a fragment of the Fourteen Points, upon which all had agreed with her to stop the war when she could still repair to formidable defences upon her own soil. He did not seek to keep all his promises, but he asked to keep some. Instantly there was a change. France had trusted the American President, and had been deceived. With difficulty were journals full of diatribes against him kept from his eyes. With difficulty were they persuaded to show some continuation of respect to the guest of the nation. The godlike Wilson had lost his halo. When, after the short return to Washington, he landed again on the shores of France he beheld bare wharves and streets deserted. He had not understood that fine creature, France. No. He had just discovered that France, or her Government, was at heart military. He had discovered that at any cost she must have "*la prépondérance légitime de la France.*"<sup>1</sup>

That the English, too, lost some of their temporary admiration for Woodrow Wilson is true, but the Press of that country had the decency to let him off without abuse. They had a sense of dignity. No English newspaper, for example, was ever guilty of such black ingratitude as the *Petit Bleu*, which, as late as March 1921, complaining of our Senate's refusal to vote an appropriation for an embassy building at Paris, had the shamelessness to say: "Of all the profiteers of the war, the Americans are the greatest, or in the last analysis the only ones."<sup>2</sup>

Had we not aided France by sending a vast army overseas? Had any other country ever done as much before,

<sup>1</sup> Thompson's *Peace Conference Day by Day*, p. 26. This book, which has the prefatory encomium of Colonel House, is an entertaining narrative of how President Wilson was defeated in his Fourteen Points by the foreign diplomats, and chiefly through the revengeful and none too scrupulous Clemenceau.

<sup>2</sup> *New York World*, March 2, 1921.



enlisted in another's cause, and when in no peril itself enforced conscription for service across an ocean? Had we asked anything in return? Having multiplied our national debt twenty-fold, had we asked a dollar of indemnity from the conquered, a single contribution from our Allies? We had gone into the war the most lightly taxed of all countries. We came out of it one of the most heavily taxed.<sup>1</sup>

The French have always assumed one thing, that the people (not their leaders by any means) too generally believed to be true—that this war was an attack utterly unforeseen; that it was utterly unprovoked; that it was launched upon nations utterly unprepared; that Germany was wholly in the wrong; that neither France nor Russia was in the wrong at all. Germany was, consequently, a bandit, an outlaw, from which fact it became the duty of a people like ours instantly to take up arms against her. Our dallying, our debating, our hesitating, was cowardice and love of profit. When at last we joined the Allies we did so from a sense of danger. The French in consequence owed us nothing, except reproaches for delay.

When I think of the noble host we sent abroad, when I think of their boyish hope, their sanguine ardour to aid mankind, when I think of the goodwill we hoped to bring about, the lasting peace between nations that had hacked each other in so many wars, I know that no army ever embarked in pursuit of a purer glory. No, there never went to battle legions with so little desire to bring back anything for themselves or their native land. It was not America we were saving; not one in a thousand believed we were ourselves

<sup>1</sup> While our national debt is now about twenty-three thousand millions, the total cost of the war, so much did we tax ourselves while it proceeded, was nearly double that, or, according to the formal estimates filed in the Senate, March 5, 1921, forty-four thousand millions, that of Great Britain fifty-one thousand millions. This was the gross cost, from which we had small deductions by indemnities, the English ten thousand millions. The money cost of the war to each was, in the net, nearly the same.

To our public disbursements must be added private bounty to France without parallel. Yet when in February 1922 we, after long patience, proposed ultimate though very deferred repayment of the public part, petulance and discourtesy greet us in the French Senate, where a member cries out, "Has Shylock passed to the other side of the Atlantic?" *Associated Press*, February 6, 1922. It was in that month or early in March that M. Loucheur delicately reminded us that a good many people in France did not think that France really owed us the loans.



in danger. It was England that we would aid, France that should not die.

Not since the Crusades has a soldiery gone forth with a purpose so high. The Australians, indeed, as well as the fine Canadians sets ail with lofty resolution, but still their own flag was already under fire, their own empire liable to fall. Not one American in a thousand, I say again, felt that we were in danger, not one in a thousand doubted that we could defend this continent against a victorious Germany.<sup>1</sup>

Woe to the administration which, had our national sentiment of saving France been less, should have proposed conscription for service overseas! From one end of the country to the other there would have been riots and tumultuous meetings. I feel safe in saying that no administration would have dared to enforce such a conscription statute simply because it was a written law. What gave it vitality was the romantic feeling, even of those who did not favour the Allies altogether, that this was an opportunity for our country, by one enormous exertion and sacrifice, to put an end to war for ever. That was our dream. When it was subsequently shattered, this bitterness was added to our awakening, that those whom we sacrificed so much to save believed us incapable of such a dream.

If there be any misunderstanding between ourselves and the people of the Allies, it comes of the multitudes having been in all countries uninformed of many details of the growing friction between European Governments, facts which had they been frequently disclosed, might have aggravated or created the very evil. I say in all countries, though in England truth was allowed voice which, before we went into the war, she felt it essential to herself in the stress of war not to impart to us, and which, after we went into the war, we would not allow ourselves to hear. Of the first situation a striking instance is Morel's *Truth and the War*, a book which

<sup>1</sup> In our military circles it was well known that the German fleet was not bunkered for service across the Atlantic, or even for long cruises beyond the North Sea, and in declining a share of them as prizes of war our Naval Department included this reason. As for the plain people, so little did they conceive of danger to our own shores that, during the war, I was advised that the soundest argument to the multitude was not that this country was itself in danger, but that it was our duty to support those already under arms.

it was made criminal to export to any neutral country, and yet a book which England permitted to be printed, as an Englishman's right, at home.

How utterly false were some of the beliefs which in the early years of the war we deemed true as Holy Writ! How devoutly we believed, for instance, that the other Governments were overwhelmed with surprise at the German declaration of war! We were positive they were surprised. Had not many of us, travelling in Europe, failed to hear a word about any approaching danger? How quickly did we accept a story now utterly exploded!

As to this error, Lord Haldane, Minister for War up to the conflict, and then Lord Chancellor, tells us frankly that he was ordered to prepare in 1905, when he first came into office; that he reorganized the British Army against war; that the Navy was put into unexampled condition; that his own staff and that of France went into collaboration as early as 1905; and that he even advised the heads of the colonial governments that they, too, should prepare themselves.<sup>1</sup> In the view I take, the preparations by England were necessary to a Government that would be brought into the conflict between the others, should that conflict occur, but it is well to be fair and see that the men at the head of her affairs were not as surprised as her people.

The British War Office even sent over to France General French, who relates the secret mission which he had there years before the conflict,<sup>2</sup> and the lively Repington gives his usual interesting details on this point, telling how surprised the French were at the offer of English military concert when he came upon members of their staff practising a little war game of how to invade England.<sup>3</sup>

Then there is Earl Loreburn, a member of the War Cabinet. This distinguished man has written a book, in which he shows that the arrangement with France was kept a secret for years even from part of the Cabinet,<sup>4</sup> to say nothing of Parliament, where Grey always eluded his questioners. Indeed,

<sup>1</sup> *Before the War*, pp. 48, 181.

<sup>2</sup> "1914," p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Diary*, vol. i, pp. 4, 10. I refer to this book as "Diary," though the title is the *First World War*.

<sup>4</sup> *How the War Came*, pp. 78-81.

Loreburn's book is written for the very purpose of showing that this power in the English Foreign Office of making international bargains in secret is a bad power.

The English make no pretence that they were surprised. A book by Captain Wright, assistant secretary of the Supreme War Council, equally disabuses our minds of the impression that the Allies had not prepared. He informs us that the reason why he preferred Sir Henry Wilson for Chief of the Imperial General Staff was that Sir Henry had prepared for this war all his life. "He had been over the ground on which it was to be fought time after time on his bicycle."<sup>1</sup> There is also Sir Julian Corbett's summary in his *Naval Operations* that, "Given the scale which we deliberately chose to adopt, there is no doubt that the machinery for setting our forces in action had reached *an ordered completeness in detail that has no parallel in history.*"

There is, besides, the book by a former Member of Parliament, a Mr. Neilson, who very early pointed out that the preparations of France and Russia for war vastly exceeded those of Germany both on land and sea,<sup>2</sup> and that the greater preparations of France, Russia, and England were seldom mentioned.

Thus one of our most sacred suppositions was all wrong. The Allies were thoroughly prepared. But there was another thing not to be doubted. The German Army at all events was perfect, always at maximum strength. "They had been preparing for this war for forty years." Now, here again we were wrong. It was easy to have figured the thing from the *Statesman's Year Book*, or any good statistical compilation, but let us at last have the truth from an eminent English reviewer and authority on German affairs in 1912.<sup>3</sup>

How great the neglect of the German Army has been and how insufficient its strength can be shown to any layman. Germany has a population of 66,000,000, France of only 38,000,000. From these figures we might conclude that Germany would have a standing army

<sup>1</sup> *At the Supreme War Council*, p. 39. Wright is one of the most pleasing writers produced by the war. Some of the passages in his book are so eloquent as to create a wonder why his profession was not literature.

<sup>2</sup> *How Diplomats Make War*. See Chapter X, *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> J. Ellis Barker in the *Nineteenth Century*, June 1913. See Repington strongly to the same effect in Chapter X. See the full details in the chapter on "Allied Preparedness."

at least fifty per cent. larger than that of France. However, a glance at the reference table shows that the standing armies of France and Germany are nearly equal. The German war material also is scarcely up to date. The military outfit of France is superior, according to Lieutenant-Colonel Bézel of the French artillery and many other experts, the German artillery is inferior to the French. The tactics of the German army have become antiquated.

It is observable, too, that this contemporary critic is comparing Germany simply with France, and not stating what further allowance she ought to have against the combination with Russia.

We all remember another story that the Germans had had a Crown Council on July 5th, nearly a month before the war, at Potsdam, where all the heads of both the Austrian and German ruling families, together with their military chiefs, assembled and decided on war. No story seemed to us more satisfactorily proved. Had not the German Wangenheim told our own minister at Constantinople about it, giving Morgenthau the very details? We all know now that this Wangenheim was romancing, or was repeating a story that was spread over Europe, and even part of Germany, and which is as hard to get out of the heads of the multitudes as the story that President Wilson encouraged the Czecho-Slovakian cause so zealously because Masarsky's wife was a sister-in-law of President Wilson's wife.<sup>1</sup> Will the people never accept what has so often been set right, that Roosevelt did not charge up a certain hill in Cuba? He was for years the hero of the wrong hill. We still have, too, the Battle of *Bunker Hill*.

That there was a Crown Council on July 5th is discounted by Sir Horace Rumbold, British *chargé d'affaires* at Berlin during all that month of July, a diplomat surrounded by those who kept him informed of the movements of all royal personages, and by Sir Maurice de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna. Rumbold's opinion was that no resolution for war was taken by the Germans until the 29th of July, or a day or two after the beginning of the Russian mobilization.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Bass, *The Peace Tangle*.

<sup>2</sup> See the official English pamphlet, *Outbreak of the War*, by Oman, pp. 16 and 17 (1919). M. Poincaré apparently abandons this story too, *The Origins*, p. 175.



Bethmann-Hollweg tells us that he himself attended the so-called Council at Potsdam on July 5th, that none of the Royal Austrian personages were there, nor any of the German royal personages, except the Kaiser, nor any military experts or chiefs at all; that the Kaiser and he had luncheon with the Austrian Ambassador, who handed the Kaiser the well-known personal communication of the Emperor of Austria.<sup>1</sup> He further says that the slightest inquiry will show that all these great chiefs and royalties were not only not at Potsdam, but could not at that time even have been in Berlin. Von Moltke, Chief of Staff, and Von Tirpitz, head of the Navy, were both at watering-places.<sup>2</sup>

We Americans in truth know nothing of European politics. Take the case of Sweden. People in this country were exceedingly vexed because the Swedes during the war were in a degree pro-German. Why should they not have been such, at least at the outset of the war? Was not Russia the inevitable geographical enemy of Sweden? What would have happened to Sweden if Russia had prevailed in the war? The fate of Finland. And the Swedish intuition and knowledge of the situation have proved correct, for, as we have seen,<sup>3</sup> and shall see again, the Russians were, by a secret treaty with France during the war, to have Central Europe very largely at their disposal, and their obligation to Sweden dishonoured. If we had even known a little of the European situation we could have divined this reason in the Swedish attitude. Russia wanted to reach the warm Atlantic. The weakest obstacle in her way was Sweden. To the Swedes accordingly Germany was a degree of protection.

Then there was the Lichnowsky story, a story true enough in so far as it tended to prove that there were military mad men in Berlin, as there were in several other countries, who dearly longed for war, but a book clearly wrong in its attempt

<sup>1</sup> *Reflections on The World War*, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Fay's searching article already cited destroys this tale. But what better shows its absurdity than the Kaiser's departure to the Norway coast immediately after it? He had resolved on war against two, and some insist three, of the principal nations of Europe, and yet he goes off where none of his great chiefs could be conferred with! Impossible! Russia and France alone would engage the utmost strength of Germany fighting on two fronts. Nevertheless we preferred to add the very departure to his offences by calling it a part of a conspiracy.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter I and Appendix D.



to prove that the Government of Germany was bent on war. Not only is his story disproved by subsequent revelations, but it bore at that time so many frailties on its face that had it not been favourable to the side we then favoured ourselves it would have been punctured by every country editor in the land.

Now that we have been able to see below the surface, that Lichnowsky was at odds with his Home Office and disposed to injure it, and that he was little less than an ass, it seems incredible that a man in his position could be ignorant of what was so general around him, so soon revealed, and so hostile to his own country. He tells us that on a visit to Berlin a short time before the conflict he found Bethmann-Hollweg worried over the Russian armaments, yet he admits that he assured the Chancellor that there was no cause to worry about Russia, since Russia could have no reason to quarrel with Germany. This man apparently had not noticed what all the diplomatic world was talking of, that Russia was building military railways to the German frontier and raising a vast army with French money. Moreover in this book <sup>1</sup> he confessed that "In Petrograd the saying was that the road to Constantinople lay through Berlin." Just before, in the year 1913, a war between the two countries had been prevented with the utmost difficulty.

This foolish fellow, as late as the 1st of August, 1914, the day when Germany declared war on Russia, actually telegraphs to the Chancellor asking whether Germany would let the French alone if France would remain neutral. One can scarcely keep from laughing. So absurd was his suggestion that the next day he had to cancel it because the folly of it had been made plain to him by the English Foreign Office itself.<sup>2</sup>

For everybody knew that France would in such a situation instantly attack Germany. Grey had been told this by the French Ambassador three days before in plain words <sup>3</sup>; nay, more, Grey had already told this same Lichnowsky that even

<sup>1</sup> *The Guilt of Germany*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See the correspondence in Schreiner's *The Craft Sinister*, p. 64. See Chapter XIII and the London *Daily Telegraph* of November 11, 1921, as to the confusion he created in German military circles.

<sup>3</sup> *British White Book*, 87.

if Belgium were not invaded England would probably not stay out of the war.<sup>1</sup> Nor did this Ambassador appear to know that the English fleet had been recalled from manœuvres and kept assembled for war as early as July 27th.<sup>2</sup> Did Lichnowsky suppose that this fleet was to be used on the side of Germany? Schreiner relates that he had it from one well informed that on the eve of the catastrophe the German military attaché advised Lichnowsky that the English fleet was being put in condition for war, and that the Home Office should be advised of this; whereupon Lichnowsky said he did not wish to create trouble between two countries who were at peace. Von Tirpitz relates that in the spring of 1914 Lichnowsky assured him that there would be no trouble with England; the *rapprochement* was growing!<sup>3</sup>

However, the truth is we fell into such a rage that we wanted to believe Germans to be demons. To the truth we come back to-day reluctantly. We almost hate to have Lord Haldane remind us that the "Germans and the English resemble each other more than they differ,"<sup>4</sup> and to hear Mr. H. G. Wells say that everybody who is not crazy knows that man for man the Germans are very like the Americans, the English, the French, and the Italians,<sup>5</sup> and to read the British Ambassador's address at Princeton, in which he stated that "Germany was being forced into a position in which she almost had to fight," a conclusion upon her economic situation, but a concession that would have been regarded at one time as no less than treasonable.<sup>6</sup> Equally is it odd now to hear Earl Loreburn say that he feels some sympathy with the Germans for what they had to suffer from the repeated invasions by the kings of France.<sup>7</sup>

Then there was our belief that this war was entered upon by France as a war of democracy against autocracy. Yet the slightest reflection ought to have shown us the absurdity

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>3</sup> Von Tirpitz, *My Memoirs*, vol. i, p. 309.

<sup>4</sup> *Before the War*, pp. 26, 40.

<sup>5</sup> His article in the American newspapers, November 1921.

<sup>6</sup> Sir Auckland Geddes, June 15, 1920. *New York Times* of the following day.

<sup>7</sup> *How the War Came*, p. 251.

of this. If it was ever less than absurd, it was not less than absurd at the outbreak. Think of it! The most absolute despot in Europe, the despot most disdainful of the people, the most surrounded by a corrupt and tyrannous aristocracy, had the greatest army of all against the Germans. Let us think what would have happened to Europe if Russia had won this war. All Scandinavia would have shared the fate of Finland, the better part, and perhaps all, of Germany would have gone to the Tsar, who would have extended an absolute autocracy to the Rhine. But at that time, no. He was the good Tsar, and all his drunken relatives were good men, gentle fellows too, who had felt a great change come over them for the better when they wished to have us join them in the war. It is a sorry business to think of the noble young Frenchmen and Englishmen that fell to aid those scoundrels. One does not know whether to weep or to laugh because such idle tales were believed.

And all this was propaganda. The most curious thing is that most of it began before the war, a precaution we can now realize from experience, but which at that time would have been regarded as ridiculous.

Let us hear what that stout anti-German, the learned Dr. Dillon, states about the preparatory propaganda. Dillon, though he hated the Germans, knew that Russia was a dangerous Power to encourage. As to his efforts to educate his countrymen, though, he says he met with nothing but discouragement. *Everything counter to friendliness to Russia was, he says, thrust aside as malevolent or unfounded.* He says he tried to have laudatory statements about Russia corrected, "*and more than once systematic efforts were put forth to have me punished by the Tsar's Government for my temerity.*" This author depicts the adulation of the French Press for the Tsar Nicholas and their exaggerations of his personal and public reforms.<sup>1</sup>

Bertrand Russell tells us the same thing,<sup>2</sup> for he says: "So long as enmity between England and Russia was desired, our newspapers were full of the cruel treatment meted out

<sup>1</sup> Dillon, *Eclipse of Russia*, pp. 231, 232. Dillon, being in Russia as a correspondent as well as semi-diplomatist, was doubtless made uncomfortable for the efforts he describes.

<sup>2</sup> *Proposed Roads to Freedom*, p. 144.

to Russian political prisoners, the oppression of Finland and Russian Poland, and other such topics. As soon as our foreign policy changed, these items disappeared from the more important newspapers, and we heard instead of the misdeeds of Germany."

No wonder there were in France many people suspicious of this glittering alliance with Russia, which might prove so much more profitable to that country than to France, at the expense of inestimable French blood and money. These people wished to know more, but they were cried down. The really great Jaurès was finally shot under the rage lashed up against him by the newspapers, some of which, we know now, were under partial subsidy from Russia. The treaty itself with Russia had been a secret since the year of its making.<sup>1</sup>

It is actually true that young Frenchmen went to battle not knowing whether the treaty called them out for their Government or for the Government of Russia, and the brilliant orators, especially Viviani, were determined that nobody should know that it was after all a Russian affair in the Balkans, or, as Earl Loreburn says of the whole thing, "a Russian quarrel into which we were led by being tied to France in the dark," pointing besides to Sir Edward Grey's famous war speech, where he admits that this conflict did not originate in anything that was vital to France.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, Grey had reminded the French Ambassador of this in an interview a few days before the fatal First of August, and Cambon had replied that France would join Russia "if she were attacked," without adding any qualification as to the cause.<sup>3</sup> At that stage the greatest man in France would have hesitated to tell the French people plainly that if Germany and Russia went to arms over the Russian policy in the Balkans, France would join Russia, though not attacked herself.

So carefully did the French Government conceal the treaty of 1892, that in 1914 it was still unknown *in its terms*. As will be seen later, M. Poincaré informs us now that Viviani

<sup>1</sup> The negotiations were begun in 1891 and took definite form in 1892. Ratifications continued for two or three years, but we may regard the treaty as that of 1892. To Viviani's boast that this treaty bore the signature of France, Dupin makes the terrible retort that 600 members of Parliament in Paris had never been able to see it. *La Guerre Infernale*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *How the War Came*, pp. 221-3.

<sup>3</sup> *British White Paper*, 87.



brought it down to the French Parliament *after the German declaration of war, and kept it in his pocket*, only to produce it if demand should be made, and not producing it because the declaration of war by Germany, made necessary by that very document in his pocket, put the people in a humour when they no longer cared or had time to debate! <sup>1</sup>

In no country was the multitude let into the vital secret. For instance, the thoughtful Viviani kept out of the French Yellow Book, which was supposed to state to the French the faultless behaviour of their Government, that the Tsar's Foreign Minister had, a week before the German declaration of war on Russia, thanked the French for the support which France was to give to Russia.<sup>2</sup> This telegram was considered infelicitous. It was deemed unfair to the French people to let them know the truth. It was considered more delicate to suppress as far as possible the whole story that the Russian mobilization was a prior mobilization, that honest Russia had really started the mobilization which precipitated the war, for the French people knew what mobilization meant in a region so compact as Europe, and would regard the first general mobilization as really the first declaration of war.

Above all things did the French Yellow Book and the Russian Orange Book both omit that upon the Kaiser's personally imploring the Tsar in the last days to stop the Russian mobilization until a conference could be had, the Tsar ordered his military chiefs to wait, but that they lied to him, first concealing that the mobilization was general, and, second, going on with it after he told them to stop. This, though perfectly well known to both the French and Russian foreign offices, was not revealed to the world until after the Russian Revolution, when that scoundrel Sukhomlinoff was brought to trial at Petrograd and confessed.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, even in 1917, a French "Committee for the Resumption of International Relations" had the courage to issue pamphlets pointing to such cunning in the heads of their Governments. These pamphlets appear to me to be

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIV.

<sup>2</sup> The telegram is set out in the *German White Book* of 1919 on "The Responsibility for the War," Part XX. The latest exposure of this concealment is in *Bulletins Officiel de la Société*, etc., April 1922, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> See the English official book of 1919 called *Oman's Outbreak of the War*.



unanswerable. They denounce Viviani's charge in his war speech that this war by Germany upon France was wholly unprovoked. On the contrary, they show that France was simply the tool of Russia. "*It was our secret treaty with Russian Tsardom, the Russian Alliance, and that alone, which dragged France into the war.*"<sup>1</sup> The treaty was never published until after the war had made its dangerous terms unimportant. It was then produced in a special Yellow Book. This Yellow Book and treaty must not be confounded with *the special treaty* of 1917, secretly made for the partition of Central Europe. On that no comment has issued from the Quai d'Orsay.

Moreover, we know that before the Germans declared war upon France they put the question to her whether she would be neutral in the war that was then coming on between Germany and Russia, whereupon France made the evasive reply that she would do whatever best concerned her interests.<sup>2</sup>

Then there was the theory that the war was begun to protect the rights of small states, the rights, for instance, of Belgium. We were told that England went into the war just for the sake of Belgium. This, too, was believed like Holy Writ. Now Sir Edward Grey himself never claimed that. On the contrary, in his war speech of August 3rd he justified the English intervention on the ground that the German violation of Belgium made it necessary for England to intervene in her own interests. It was a good reason, too. Belgium was England's eastern frontier in a military sense, or she certainly had a right to call it such. England had a right to go to war against Germany on that invasion because her own safety was concerned, a matter solely for her own judgment. But this plain and sensible reason would not suffice after the passions of war were once let loose.

So we went on giving that as the idealistic motive, though in the debates in Parliament at the outset of the war all agreed, as to the old guaranty of Belgian neutrality, that both Gladstone and other English ministers had refused to

<sup>1</sup> See quotations from this circular in the 4th edition of Morel's pamphlet, *Tsardom's Part in the War*, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> France mobilized, by way of answer, on the 1st of August. Germany and Russia were then at war. The placards announced that the mobilization was not for war but for peace! Dupin, *Considérations*, etc., p. 8.

interpret it as a guaranty which must be enforced by England under any and all conditions. For it was plain that, there being other guarantors who might go directly contrary to England, the latter might have to fight them all, should her obligation be considered unqualified. The intelligent body which Sir Edward Grey was addressing was too well informed to be deceived on that point, and it came to this, that Grey argued, and properly argued, that it was in the interest of England to protect Belgium as a part of the English national defence.

Thus we were in a foolish rage with Bethmann-Hollweg about his expression "scrap of paper." What he meant was that the English themselves would not regard the treaty as any sacred and solemn obligation at all, that they never had so regarded it, and that they would be acting now simply from their own business interests and not from any lofty idealism. Perhaps I can test this thing in a simple way. Suppose Germany had respected the neutrality of Belgium, that England had stayed out of the war, and that France had been the one to violate the neutrality of Belgium. Does anyone suppose that England would then have declared war on France? Of course not!

I am not now justifying at all the invasion of Belgium by the Germans, but it is well to remind people that we surrounded ourselves with idealistic arguments which had no real basis in the minds of those who were at the heads of these gigantic transactions.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, on this point, we also forget that Grey refused to assure the Germans that, *even if Germany should respect the neutrality of Belgium*, England would stay out of a war between Germany and France,<sup>2</sup> and since the war no English writer has pretended that she would have done so.

It is no condemnation of a nation's Government that in so momentous a thing as war it looks to its own interest. It is not necessary to demand of a Government motives exalted and sacrificial.

With war propaganda we must of course have much

<sup>1</sup> See Stowell's *Diplomacy of the War*, pp. 454, 621.

<sup>2</sup> *British White Book*, 89. "Some Englishmen greatly err as to the reasons that forced England to draw the sword. . . . Our honour and our interest may have compelled us to join France and Russia, even if Germany had scrupulously respected the right of her small neighbours." *London Times*, March 8, 1915.

patience, for, as we say of business, war is war, and when nations struggle for their existence, we must expect them to use policies that are not very frank. What we must protect ourselves against is the believing that all is truth that was created by propaganda. We must endeavour to realize the greatness of this propaganda. In any careful inquiry into this subject we must question everything we formerly accepted as fundamental truth.

For my part I have always tried to be patient with the Allied propaganda. What vexes me is that the Allies at the time they were conducting it denied us our undoubted right of mail communication with Germany, an injustice which, it may be added, our own Government made little attempt to overcome. We were never in a position after the war began to hear the other side, and the Allies could not only create propaganda, or exaggerate what had in it some truth, but, as to any contradiction, they could denounce that with safety as German propaganda, since neither the German-Americans nor neutrally minded Americans could get from Germany the materials for denial, or even for plausible invention. But, since our own Government did not insist on our rights, we need waste little time abusing the Allies for doing just what we would have done ourselves if not compelled to do otherwise. Denying neutral countries a knowledge of your enemy's facts is a part of war.

It is not, though, a very pleasant thing to pick up a book like Repington's *Diary* and find him saying: "Went down to the Foreign Office to see Max Müller, and told him that Mr. Marshall had a very good character as a journalist in America. We discussed the propaganda question in the Middle West of America, and are quite clear how it is to be done."<sup>1</sup>

The extent of the propaganda during the war and the manner in which matter was prepared for the public is staggering when we get it in detail. Mr. Schreiner<sup>2</sup> gives almost pathetic stories of his struggles as Associated Press correspondent in the Central Empires to furnish our Press a fair

<sup>1</sup> Repington's *Diary*, vol. i, p. 114, for January 27, 1916. See also his entries for July 15 and 16, 1916, and for August 11, 1916, vol. i, pp. 279 and 304. This very able military critic is an interesting diarist as well.

<sup>2</sup> *The Craft Sinister*, *passim*.

degree of information. The censors did as they pleased with everything he wrote. Mr. Stone, at the head of the Associated Press, would send telegram after telegram inquiring why he could not get more news. Even some of these telegrams were confiscated. It is impossible to read Schreiner's narrative without seeing the utter impossibility we were under of getting the truth.

Another most estimable newspaper correspondent, John Foster Bass, has left us, in a book treating generally of the disordered condition of Europe since the war, some account of the abominable censorship exercised upon the American people ruthlessly and continually. He tells us that some of the French heads of departments did not hesitate to say in secret that they freely invented such stories as would keep up the resentment of the population. This journalist tells us more. He tells us that some of the stories published as taken from the diaries or letters of Germans were really inventions, conceived in the patriotic purpose of sustaining the fury of the Allies. As to the Fourteen Points, which to our country meant so much, and which might have meant a great deal to the multitudes in the countries of the Allies, the Press of those countries, with few exceptions, avoided all reference to the fact that "a solemn agreement was made as a basis of peace terms before the Armistice."<sup>1</sup>

What does all this prove, except that war is hell in more senses than one, that you believe your enemy to be vile, and you therefore feel that you have a right to resort even to villainy to thwart him. There never, for instance, was the slightest justification of the English violation of our right at sea respecting the mails, but they speedily found a pretext in a general charge that the Germans were not treating the mails properly either. This charge an American authority has shown to be quite unfounded, the German record being rather favourable. It would not, however, have mattered what the Germans did. The English believed it essential to their safety that we should not have free communication by mail with Germany.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Foster Bass, *The Peace Tangle*, pp. 135, 136.

<sup>2</sup> The protests of Lansing and the impropriety of the English position are discussed by Scott in *Survey of International Relations between the United States and Germany*, pp. 63, 144.



But, however bad the English may have been, we ourselves, once we came into the war, surpassed everybody in intolerance. To the credit of the English be it said they knew better than this, knew better how to preserve that civil liberty which is just as valuable as the soil of one's country.

While we were causing books with disagreeable truths to be withdrawn from the public libraries and to be reported as missing, the English were actually allowing Morel to print *Truth and the War*. In the United States he would have been sent to a Federal prison for not less than twenty years. The treatment that England gave him for sending a single copy to Romain Rolland was indeed severe, for it was a sentence of an educated gentleman to six months' confinement with common felons. The author was permitted, though, to have truth as he understood it published within the bounds of his own country. Even within the sound of the German guns the right of adverse publication was upheld, and England exhibited again that her Government was fundamentally strong. The real strength of a Government, Lord Acton long ago remarked, is in its power to protect a minority.<sup>1</sup>

Returning to the subject of English breaches of our neutrality rights, wrongs like these at their hands it behoves us to forget as soon as we can, though we may not accept them as precedents. On the other hand, we must not, as I said before, relax our scrutiny as to the pro-Ally arguments and statements made us during the war. England had a natural motive to get us into the war. We were, in fact, the greatest prize possible to her. It has been said that her propaganda in this country cost between fifty millions and a hundred millions of dollars, but that was a small sum to a country which was paying out in war expenses perhaps twenty million dollars a day. All this is a part of modern war, the false being disseminated with the true, partly by blind enthusiasm, partly by reckless determination to win, partly by belief that the enemy is doing the same thing.

<sup>1</sup> Repington tells us that there were "one hundred peace meetings a week, chiefly in Wales, and that they were not reported" to the Press. In our country no peace meeting would have been permitted. A chat in a farmer's parlour between half a dozen rustics on how to end the war by overtures of peace would have been regarded as treason.



From the English point of view it was natural, but they themselves will now be the first to admit that, as I said before, it was a hard wrong to us that such propaganda should be carried on in our neutral country, while we were denied the right to hear the other side from a country with which we were not at war, and through the ordinary and hitherto respected postal service of the seas.

Exasperating as all this has been, one thought never departs from my mind. What we want is peace, and peace is most easily preserved when that horrible enemy of peace, that breeder of contempt, that mother of distrust, does not exist, a difference of tongues. Of all the woes of nations this is the most difficult to overcome. Let us then never forget that England, her Colonies, and the United States are the only group of nations that can argue, explain, or plead in a common language of the fireside, the playground, commerce and public affairs. A man who speaks with a foreign accent is always an alien. A certain distrust or indifference towards him is inherent in our very blood, but the Canadian seems no foreigner, nor the Australian, nor except to a few the Englishman. How indifferent, for example, would this country have been to the Irish if they had had to speak with an accent Spanish, Italian, or Russian.

This chapter I may conclude with one sad reflection. France has never by any Governmental act acknowledged that our joining her was a deed of kindness, or less than our own necessity. She has taken us, shrewdly enough, at our own word, our specific technical allegation that we had a grievance against Germany sufficient to justify war. Her parliament has never by solemn, imperishable vote dedicated to everlasting memory its gratitude for that army which, created, as it were, by the hand of God and rising from the distant seas, brought youth and hope and fresh resource to her thin, exhausted rear, while at the same time it brought despair to an invading host which had hurled back Italy, which had flung off Roumania, which had humbled gigantic Russia, which, after struggling four years against odds, was again chanting its battle hymn hard by imperilled Paris, and which dreaded nothing in war except the voice of its commander.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WAR OF 1870

It is extraordinary how easily we adapt our memories to our resentments ; wonderful how deftly we alter facts to suit our prejudices. In the year 1870, when the English-speaking world could see with its own eyes and hear with its own ears, its sympathies with Prussia were overwhelming. France was a restless, an ambitious country ; France was a quarrelsome country ; the Emperor of France was a dangerous imitator of Bonaparte, an intriguer at home, a bully abroad, a perpetual disturber of the peace of Europe. Such was the general judgment of men who saw and knew the great leaders, military and civil, in the Franco-Prussian War. Not a country in Europe joined France in defence. Not one of them would even argue her claims for indulgence. The opinion of Europe was absolutely against her.<sup>1</sup>

Nor during the succeeding generation did opinion even in France uphold Napoleon III in that rash business ; the very histories in its public schools advising the young that he had been himself the cause of that and many other assaults upon nations.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> " In reopening the dispute after it had seemed to be so happily settled, the French Government alienated the last remnant of sympathy felt for it in neutral countries." Dawson, *German Empire*, vol. i, p. 343. Bismarck was able to remind Favre and Thiers without contradiction that in this war they had had behind them practically every newspaper and public man in France.

<sup>2</sup> " Napoléon III a déclaré sans rime ni raison la guerre aux Russes, aux Autrichiens, aux Mexicains, aux Prussiens, et finalement il nous a fait enlevées l'Alsace et la Lorraine." *L'Instruction Civique*. Paul Bert.

" Napoléon III avait promis la paix. Pourtant, sous le Second Empire, la France fut toujours en la guerre." *L'Année préparatoire d'Histoire de France*. Lavis, 1908.

The popular history by Victor Duruy states the thing to his countrymen as mildly as possible : " But Napoleon was surrounded by influences hostile to the maintenance of peace with Prussia, and was also urged towards war by considerations of the internal politics of France. Toward the end of

In the face of all contemporary opinion is it not surprising to find Germany now denounced for the Franco-Prussian War? Is there any other way of accounting for this change of view than that rage invents or pardons a favourable lie?

The true account of the origin of that war is indeed too clearly written in history to be permanently changed, but it is proper that it be not obscured to-day. Without going back to the invasions of Germany by Louis XIV. and Louis XV, or even to those by Bonaparte, one can rest assured that Prussia was in 1870 as free from the causes of the war as she was from the actual declaration. Louis Napoleon and his Court had resolved that the German States should not be a united nation.<sup>1</sup>

Of all men that came to the head of European governments during the last century, not one was so detestable as the nephew and stupid imitator of Bonaparte. The shallow Napoleon III was, nevertheless, able to command the French during more than twenty years, after violating his oath by murdering the French Republic to begin with, nor would he have had much trouble to command them longer had he continued to bring back to the Place de la Concorde the flags of humiliated nations. It was because he could no longer lead them to victory that the French finally threw him over.

For nothing is more conclusively proved than that France must accept the blame of tolerating so long a ruler who manifestly would let no other country alone. This adventurer, in his reign of twenty years, had no fewer than five distinct wars,<sup>2</sup> in not one of which does he seem to have had real provocation, but which he plunged into without any serious organization among his countrymen to stop him. The

May 1870 the Duke of Gramont, a bitter opponent of Prussia, was made Minister of Foreign Affairs." Duruy, *History of France*, p. 659.

<sup>1</sup> In the earlier stages of Prussian growth he was not averse to her absorbing Schleswig-Holstein, for he felt that this tended to set off Prussian strength in fair balance against Austrian. He even plotted to annex Belgium, with Prussia's consent, an intrigue which Bismarck gladly betrayed later to the disgusted world. Rose, *Development of European Nations*, vol. i, pp. 29, 30.

<sup>2</sup> The list is actually as follows: The Crimean War, the Austrian War, the Assyrian Expedition, an expedition to China to force open her ports; war against the Emperor of Anam, which secured the cession of Cochin-China; the invasion of Mexico, and finally the war with Prussia. Interesting monarch! We are told that this vainglorious and meddlesome creature would have let Prussia alone had she not irritated him.

Crimean War was in no reasonable sense the business of France; the Austrian War it plainly conducted for political and territorial gain; the Mexican invasion was sheer military infatuation; the seizure of Rome wholly without intelligible purpose.

As for the War of 1870, it is astonishing that anybody should not sympathize with the Prussians who has any respect for history and the almost universal opinion of men then living, for never was monarch more determined than Louis Napoleon to have a conflict with Prussia when he could afford to have it. Indeed, the fact was so plain, his manner so undeniably aggressive, his terms so obviously offensive, that difficulty has been had by the present enemies of Germany to find her at fault. That fault they affect to discover in Bismarck's despatch of the famous message known as the Ems telegram which, since it is so often talked of, it may be well to do more than mention here.

Summed up, the incident amounts to this: that Bismarck and Moltke, finding that their sovereign was making a mild reply to an impudent demand unfairly repeated, decided to make his answer appear a stern and formal reply to an impudent demand unfairly repeated. Contemporary Europeans who heard the demand as well as the reported reply found no fault with the answer. What Bismarck did was not to make the reply for the King of Prussia, but to state to the Press, as he was authorized to do, what that reply had been. It required ingenuity, indeed, to say that in reporting the thing to the Press he altered anything; but whether he altered it or not, the real words of the King were known by the French agent Benedetti, and by him in his own language to Paris. Benedetti arrived in Paris four days before the declaration of war, and he has left his testimony that in his interview with the King of Prussia there was neither "insulter nor insulted."

And what were the facts? They were simple enough. The French adventurer, fretful over the growth of Prussia which he felt was yet small enough in a still divided Germany and flanked by unfriendly Austria, to be easily overcome, and anxious to carry the flag of his impatient subjects into fresh kingdoms, advised Wilhelm I that the royal house of



Prussia must not permit one of its members to be a candidate for a vacancy which then happened to exist on the throne of Spain. To this notification, itself barely reasonable, Wilhelm I made courteous compliance, and caused the proposal of his relative to be withdrawn. War was thus avoided. Did this suit the Emperor of France? Far from it. War was what this creature wanted. He accordingly pressed the gentle king further; a promise must be given by the house of Prussia that at no time thereafter would one of that family ever be a candidate for the throne of Spain.

Such a demand, had it been addressed to the Emperor of France, would have been deemed an insult justifying nothing less than war, if we may allow to the people of France that sensitiveness which some now say should have been expected by Bismarck when he, instead of having his royal master declare war on what amounted to an affront, caused his answer to be merely cold, stern, or brusque. Sensitiveness, the right to go to war on incivility between ambassadors, is, it appears, reasonable at Paris and unreasonable at Berlin.

Louis Napoleon, not Prussia, declared war. He declared war with the enthusiasm of his people, who huzzaed when he appeared, amid public rejoicings, the boastful eulogies of the Press, resolutions of city councils, and the blessings of pulpits.

Insensate people! Mad and cruel war! France as one man decided to invade Germany, with which she had been at peace more than half a century; to invade Germany because after a German sovereign had renounced for his relative a neighbouring throne, he would not promise never to let a relative of his at any time be a candidate for that throne. What throne was that? Of a country controlled by France or a country whose people had been enemies of France? No! Spain never has been hostile to France and is separated from France by lofty mountains. Never was war more senseless. There was nothing to cause it except vain and foolish pride, a shallow sovereign, a people fond of battle, of mobilizations, of manœuvres, of victorious entries into distant capitals, of triumphant marches home. Such were the French of 1870. Changed they may since have become, but no fair, candid student of history can question that in that period

the French were still exceedingly martial, that they deemed military prowess the highest glory of a state, and that they exulted in the Eylau and Tilsit of Bonaparte as they had been recently rejoicing in the Magenta and Solferino of Louis Napoleon.

Nor had any people in Europe done more to perpetuate among their youth the spirit of war. Not satisfied with those monuments and statues with which all nations honour their great commanders, not satisfied with what the skill of their great artists and sculptors could do to commemorate to posterity the victories of France, they stamped upon innumerable squares and avenues the names of those battles in which they had slaughtered the foe, though themselves invaders, as if they were resolved to blister the eyes of such of their former enemies as might in times of peace visit the brilliant capital of France. Through six lordly avenues the Arc de Triomphe radiates the exultation of France over one particular nation, repeatedly assaulted by the great French masters of the art of war.

The attempt made in recent years to load Prussia with the hateful fame of military industry is neither unsuccessful nor wholly unfair, but what kind of man is he who shuts his eyes for that reason to the insensate wars of France, which from her earliest history has exulted and been successful in war? The very vocabulary of war is French, and such in nearly every European tongue; in that business we must seek in vain for a single noun or verb that has another source. Accordingly, what Bismarck and Moltke had to face was folly led by an unscrupulous master. Nor must we forget what the name of that master was, what memories and apprehensions must have been awakened in the German mind by the word *Napoleon*. During twenty years that name had been, as it was even in England, a terror to children and women. A hundred villages throughout the German States recalled the awful traditions of his swift, triumphal campaigns. Over all of Germany were his many seals of blood. Her ransacked capitals could conceal from no beholder the scars of Bonaparte.

The descendant of the great conqueror plainly essayed the same career, which he had already been following in

offensive war and which he had commemorated to posterity by his own hand as a royal author in pompous folios emblazoned with the Imperial arms. That he would sooner or later attack the race whom famous French monarchs had so often bloodily attacked was scarcely to be doubted. His defeat of Austria had been as quick as that of Austria by Prussia. He was determined, and all Germany knew it, not to allow the German States to terminate their internal discords and to solidify themselves against outside assault by becoming one nation. Such was the fear that even Bismarck had of French invasion that he was compelled to reject, shortly before 1870, the petition of Baden to join the German confederation and to admit that, if he should permit Baden to come in, he must have a war with France.

The problem before Bismarck and Moltke, then, appealed to their common sense and was decided by their love of country. Themselves perfectly prepared for action and Napoleon, though he was not aware of it, unprepared, they nevertheless declared no war on France. They simply made such a statement to the Press as caused her dictator to appear to have been answered in the style in which he had addressed their sovereign.<sup>1</sup> That statement they were authorized to make and no language was prescribed for them. They could have used their own and harder language. If Napoleon wanted war at once, he could have a willing adversary. He did want war. His foolish people, too, wanted war, and they seized the most trivial of all excuses. The vote of the French legislative assembly was overwhelmingly for war.<sup>2</sup>

The reflections of Bismarck himself on this subject in his

<sup>1</sup> Aside from the importunate manner of Benedetti, we must remember that his seeking a direct audience with the King was a diplomatic impropriety. He should have approached him only with his consent and through the Chancellor. What he did was to force an interview upon him in the promenade at a watering-place.

<sup>2</sup> That up to the eve of war Napoleon believed his forces to be in excellent condition is the general view, but it is clear that when the Prussian reply left him where he must either declare war or suffer a revolution that had been steadily approaching, he was much depressed because his Staff was no longer able to conceal from him the disorder of its affairs. Personal observers mention his gloom. See Madame Moulton's *In the Courts of Memory*, p. 250; *Memoirs of Monsieur Claude*, the head of the Paris police, p. 265. The latter relates, we may add, that in the Imperial train starting to the front, a train of thirty cars, were several state carriages prepared for a triumphal entry into Berlin!

serene later years must be approved by such as wish to be fair. "It was hard to find in the law of nations," he says, "a pretext for France to interfere with the freedom of Spain to choose a king."<sup>1</sup>

No eminent French historian during half a century has sought to excuse the precipitancy of their Government in 1870. On the contrary, their own fault they have almost always admitted. As to Bismarck's part in it the friends of France can scarcely object to the judgment of the *Histoire Politique*.<sup>2</sup>

"The Franco-German War," states an eminent authority<sup>3</sup> as late as September, 1914, "was not caused by Bismarck's alteration of the Ems telegram, but by the pent-up and century-old hatred existing between France and Germany by the passionate desire of the German states to form a united empire, and by the determination of Napoleon III to prevent such a union and to rule the continent of Europe."<sup>3</sup> If it had been Prussia that was bent on war, she had only to decline to withdraw the relative's name and have a war. The name, however, was withdrawn, and still France was not satisfied. "Prussia in 1870," Lloyd George himself has said,<sup>4</sup> "was fighting against a restless military Emperor dominated largely by military ideals."

Nor can we omit the comments of our then Minister to France: "The French Ambassador, M. Benedetti, denied that he received the slightest indignity from the King. . . . It really appeared that the Government of France had determined to have war with Germany *coûte que coûte*. The talk that Germany was to put a German prince on the throne of

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, vol. ii, p. 87. To me this seems a correct conclusion whether Bismarck did or did not suggest the candidate to Spain.

<sup>2</sup> "The Duc de Gramont. He it was who embroiled France in the war with Prussia. . . . They were counting on a sure victory." Of the Ems telegram he says: "It is enough to compare the two texts to show that there was no falsification. . . . The note published by Bismarck has nothing which is not in the original dispatch; it simply abbreviates." *Seignobos*, pp. 184, 810, American edition, 1900. "To describe this as 'forgery' is childish," Sir Adolphus Ward in *Germany*, vol. ii, p. 442 (1918). The Ems dispatch was "neither a falsification nor a forgery." Robertson's *Bismarck* (1918), a biography by no means indulgent.

<sup>3</sup> J. Ellis Barker in the *Fortnightly Review*, September 1914. The author of *Modern Germany*, who in 1904 had declared the German fleet an intentional menace to England, may be reckoned impartial enough.

<sup>4</sup> July 1, 1917.



Spain was but a mere pretext. The courtiers and adventurers who surrounded the Emperor seemed to think it about time to have a war."<sup>1</sup>

The opinion of that brilliant French publicist, Gabriel Hanotaux, would seem conclusive to most students. The final defeat, he says, had the additional drop of bitterness to French public men that they had to admit every one of them, "We have sinned, all, all." He does not fail to cite also the resolution passed by the National Assembly, in which, accepting the abdication of Napoleon III, it laid to him the "responsibility for the ruin, the invasion and the disruption of France."<sup>2</sup>

An accurate English writer's opinion may be added. Referring to the Prussian King's withdrawing the candidate on Napoleon's first ultimatum, he says :

Bismarck's luck, however, did not desert him at this supreme hour of his country's fate. France had won a great victory over Prussia. With egregious folly she now determined to add humiliation to defeat.<sup>3</sup>

So frequently is this affair of the Ems telegram distorted nowadays, that I have appended to this chapter in parallel columns the telegram which Bismarck received from his king and the telegram which he gave out to the Press.

For my own part I may add that in several journeys through France before 1914, I frequently sounded the opinion of both scholars and business men there as to the causes of the Franco-Prussian War, without hearing from a single one a contention that the Prussians were to be charged with it, or that they could long have avoided it. What Frenchmen have always bitterly denounced in that war was the seizure of Alsace and Lorraine.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Recollections of a Minister to France*, Washburn, ch. ii. The Prussian Queen implored William I with tears to remember Jena and Tilsit and not to go to war. Bismarck, *Reminiscences*, vol. ii, p. 98. Eugénie (if most gossips can be believed), spurred Napoleon to the conflict.

<sup>2</sup> Hanotaux, *Contemporary France*, vol. i, pp. 23, 134.

<sup>3</sup> *Evolution of Prussia*, Marriott, p. 363.

<sup>4</sup> The general reader will find an entertaining and impartial sketch of the career of Napoleon III in *France since Waterloo*, by the English writer, Grinton Berry. "The French nation as a whole cannot evade its responsibility for the Second Empire. Napoleon was the arm of the nation and he was invested with very wide powers because the nation desired a strong arm unfettered," p. 199.

In conclusion, let me advert to the preparations of Louis Napoleon to interfere with German unity several months before this incident of the Spanish succession by quoting from still another English authority. "The general details of that dispute," says Professor Rose, "are well known. What is far less known is a factor vital to the whole discussion, namely, that by order of the French Emperor a French general, Lebrun, had in the month of January 1870 gone to Vienna to discuss plans for a Franco-Austrian alliance, with a view to a joint attack on the North German Confederation in the spring of the next year."<sup>1</sup>

Two great errors seem to me to have occurred in European policies. First, Germany in 1871 should have forbidden France, long odious to Europe for her wars, to maintain a large army. Second, England should have forbidden Germany, to create a large navy. By the former inhibition Germany, free in the West, would have had no fears from Russia and her militarists would have gradually sunk before her merchants; by the latter inhibition England could at all times have protected France.

ABEKEN TO BISMARCK.

EMS, July 13,  
3.40 P.M.

"His Majesty, the King, writes to me:

"Benedetti approached me on the Promenade to ask me finally, in a very pressing way, to authorize him to telegraph that I would for the future not again give my approval if the Hohenzollerns renewed their candidature. I refused in a serious enough tone at

BISMARCK'S STATEMENT  
TO THE PRESS.

After the news of the renunciation of the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been communicated to the Imperial French Government by the Royal Spanish Government, the French Ambassador afresh required at Ems of His Majesty, the King, authorization to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty, the King, undertook for the future not again to give his consent if the

<sup>1</sup> *Germany in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 14 (1912). Whether the Prussian Court then knew of this he is not sure, but he deems it exceedingly probable. See Sybel's *Foundation of the German Empire*, vol. vii, p. 281. Professor Rose details Lebrun's errand in *Development of European Nations*, vol. i, p. 39. See Lebrun's own *Souvenirs Militaires*. This bad incident is, of course, accepted history. See Ward's *Germany*, vol. ii, pp. 416-18 (1918). Sir Adolphus Ward and Professor Rose enjoy in England the same pre-eminence on German political history that Dawson does on German economics.

the end of our conversation, for one must not and cannot take such engagements forever.

“ ‘I told him very naturally that I had not received anything more, and that he could easily understand, as he was informed before me of news from Paris and Madrid that my Government was not concerned in the matter.’

“ His Majesty received immediately afterwards a letter from the Prince. As his Majesty had told Benedetti that he expected news from the Prince, he decided, on the suggestion of Prince Eulenberg and myself, and in consideration of the opinions expressed above, not again to receive Benedetti, but to inform him by his aide-de-camp that His Majesty had received from “ Prince ” Bismarck confirmation of the news that Benedetti had already received from Paris, and that His Majesty had nothing further to say to the Ambassador.

“ His Majesty leaves it to your Excellency to decide whether the new demand of Benedetti and the refusal with which he met it should be communicated to our ministers abroad and to the Press.”

Bismarck did not communicate with France or its Ambassador, nor was he asked by his King to do so. He was permitted to address the Press and in his own language. On the foregoing, peaceful France declared war and started toward the Rhine.

## FROM THE WAR OF 1870 TO THE FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE.

The Government of the new German Empire settled down immediately to the arts of peace, for amid the general rejoicings it was the universal sense of the nation that, though remaining always fully armed, it should have many years of thrift and repose. Only during the year 1875 were the relations of France

Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. His Majesty, the King, therefore refused to receive the French Ambassador again and informed him by his aide-de-camp that His Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador.

and Germany strained again.<sup>1</sup> The thing passed away quickly. Nobody had any great desire for war. The most that can be said is that the Germans, though victorious and strong, distrusted France, which had been so often able to assail them. Germany had found her freedom at last in a unity which she knew was distasteful to her ancient enemy.

In the midst of all this calm there occurred an event which was destined to have a direct influence toward the tragedy of 1914. Russia in 1876 plunged into a war with Turkey.

The reader will bear in mind that in 1853 Russia had made an attempt to secure her long-desired outlet to the Mediterranean, and had been thwarted by France and England in what is known as the Crimean War. France having now fallen, what partner could England have against Russia should the latter renew her assault on the Straits? England could have no partner. Exhausted France dare not attempt to aid her; Germany had every reason not to provoke Russia by joining England in a field in which at that time Germany had not even the remotest interest and which Bismarck had declared was not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. Neither Italy nor Austria was willing to go into a war on the side of England on a mere question of the Dardanelles. The result was that the Tsar, shortly after the defeat of the French by Prussia, declared himself no longer bound by provisions imposed upon him in the unsuccessful Crimean War, and in 1876 found cause, as I have just stated, for a conflict with Turkey.

The conflict was short, and from the point of view of Russia entirely satisfactory, her victorious armies concluding the Peace of San Stefano in the suburbs of Constantinople.

The Treaty of San Stefano had been indeed a triumph. What Russia could not by its terms either seize for herself or dare to accept, she at least tore from the vanquished Turk and flung to the greedy little states of the Balkan Peninsula. Reduced, indeed, was the western territory of Turkey. To Montenegro, to Serbia, to Bulgaria and to Roumania were given portions of the carcase, all except Greece getting some-

<sup>1</sup> What is called the war scare of 1875 is sufficiently well narrated by De Blowitz, the famous correspondent of the *London Times* in his most agreeable *Memoirs*.



thing. For herself Russia obtained, besides a substantial indemnity, a large part of Armenia.

Loud was the clamour concerning these gains among the other European Powers, who forthwith resolved by concert to reduce them. Chief among the dissatisfied was England, which still saw in Turkey, as she had seen during the Crimean War, a fence against Russian progress toward the Mediterranean and India. The sagacious Beaconsfield had little trouble in arranging the 1878 conference known to history as the Congress of Berlin. There the plunder collected by Russia was taken from her piece by piece, her donees in the Balkans trimmed of their enlarged domains. Greece, ever the client of England, received a territorial award; Austria was allowed military occupation and administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina; while Russia herself gave up all the Armenian cession except a free harbour at Batum, together with a minor strip along the Armenian shore.

The unspeakable vexation of Russia now centred itself upon Bismarck, the bluntest of the arbitrators and not the most untruthful. A storm of abuse was discharged upon him. The commonest civilities of diplomatic intercourse were for a time wholly dropped. Russian tariffs were levelled against German goods, Russian troops were assembled on the German frontier.

History generally has acquitted Bismarck of unfriendliness to Russia in this revision, which was vastly more important to England, and at any rate more consistent with her long support of Turkey against Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The congress had been held at Berlin because it was obvious to all that Germany was the least interested in the contentions, and it is impossible at this day to say that as compensation for the mischiefs that subsequently befell her out of this settlement she got a single thing to her advantage. All that has ever been pointed out as gain to her was Austria's supervising privileges in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but at that

<sup>1</sup> For a brief, clear sketch of the Berlin Congress, see that popular book, *The Diplomatic Background of the War*, p. 27. Earl Loreburn cheerfully acknowledges his country's fault at that Congress. "A great opportunity to settle the Balkan trouble was lost," he says, "through the antagonism between Russia and Great Britain. Our policy of supporting the Turk for fear of Russian aggrandizement and aggression in India or elsewhere bore its natural fruits." See *How the War Came*, p. 33.

time there was neither alliance nor treaty between Germany and Austria-Hungary, and, on the other hand, complete accord between the royal houses of Russia and Germany.

The result of the congress must be considered a wonderful triumph of English diplomacy. Russia and England had been on the verge of war over the Treaty of San Stefano. Indeed, England had even been in secret treaty with Turkey, from which, in return for assured protection, England was to obtain, and subsequently did obtain, the Island of Cyprus, so that without striking a blow she got everything she wanted and left Bismarck and his country to take the blame. An English fleet, which had been stationed at the Dardanelles to scowl on the Russian advance, was now recalled, and such was the adroitness of Beaconsfield, that the whole ill-humour of Russia turned, as I have said, from London to Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

With the Congress of Berlin ended the friendly relations which the royal families of Prussia and Russia had so long maintained. The change, full of mischief to the future of Europe, filled Bismarck himself immediately with alarm. The student of history cannot be told too often that dread of the Russian monster inhered in every Teuton, the dread of a thing incalculable, vast, and though unwieldy, continually increasing in size and power. Such became the uneasiness of Bismarck that he sought forthwith some kind of defensive alliance with Austria, on whose ribs the gigantic creature of the East equally rested.

In September 1879 he was able to make Austria an ally under an arrangement which, when Italy subsequently came into it, was known as the Triple Alliance. Russia was specially referred to in it. Each was to defend the other if either was attacked by that Power, but if "another" Power should attack either, then the ally not attacked was to be merely neutral unless, which was the third condition, Russia should then take the part of the "other" Power, in which event the non-attacked ally should automatically come to the rescue of the ally attacked. It was, in other words, not an alliance

<sup>1</sup> The return of Beaconsfield to London was a sort of triumph. The year before he had made the Queen "Empress of India," and was now at the height of his career. The Congress of Berlin, I may add, is not to be confounded with the "Conference" held there two years later to pass upon Turkey's non-compliance with some of the decrees.

against France unless France, attacking either Austria or Germany, should be assisted by Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The dread which both Austria and Germany had of Russia is clear in the readiness with which the two former Powers united under this treaty, for they had both disliked each other many generations and had been but a few years before at war. According to Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, the Austrians could not at first believe that Bismarck was serious. Andrassy, when he saw that Bismarck actually was serious, "jumped to the ceiling for joy."<sup>2</sup>

### ITALY AN UNCERTAIN PARTNER.

The attachment of Italy to Germany and Austria was but slight. She went into the Triple Alliance for a variety of motives, transitory, not deep. Between Germany and Austria-Hungary the alliance was based on concern for national existence against a gigantic alien race, from whom Italy was sufficiently shielded for the present by sea and mountains.

The most noticeable feature of the Italian engagement appears at the very beginning—she was not to be bound if Great Britain be involved. Upon that point so sure did this partner wish to be that on a renewal of the treaty in 1897 a clause was added that she would not be bound even against France in case that Power became allied with England against the Central Powers, a prophetic caution indeed.

One thing must be borne in mind. The adding of Italy to the alliance of Austria and Germany was not aggression. The necessity of the latter to have Italy at least neutral is absolutely plain, because the friction between Italy and Austria was racially deep, so deep that the Central Empires could never feel secure against the terrible combination of

<sup>1</sup> See the full and short text, Appendix B. See also Tardieu, *France and the Alliances*, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, *Memoirs*, vol. ii, p. 253. This statesman was unfavourable to the alliance, which he did not think would prevent France and Russia from ultimately joining, but he says that Bismarck believed the treaty would insure peace. De Blowitz, *Memoirs*, p. 144, entertains us with Bismarck's story of how he spared Austria after Sadowa because he had in mind that he must ultimately have her friendship in some such situation.

Russia and France, if Italy should join against them in the West. It is useless for the French to justify their subsequent course by pointing to this frail partner.

One thing was clear, Italy could not be counted upon by the Central Empires in any war in which England should be adverse. An easy prey would Naples, Genoa and Venice be, and all the Italian commerce and all the African colonies of Italy, to the navy of England. Accordingly France and Russia counted surely upon defection by Italy as they saw the cautious Grey drawn slowly into their circle.

Even before that, however, they began to detach Italy from the Triplice. An estrangement from France on account of Tunis was composed about 1896. In October of that year there was also executed a navigation agreement, and in November of 1898 a stipulation as to commerce, between the two nations.<sup>1</sup>

After England joined them, so sure did the Entente feel, that they really preferred to have Italy remain an ostensible associate of her old allies, to be to the Central Empires, as they called it, "a dead weight."<sup>2</sup>

The despair of Von Moltke in respect to Italy we have seen in his sombre view of the situation in his memorandum of December, 1912.<sup>3</sup>

"Few Germans," said an eminent reviewer before the war, "believe that Germany can count on Italy's support in the hour of need. Italy would not think of supporting Germany in a war against France and still less in a war against Great Britain or Great Britain and France combined. Most Germans think that in a great European war Italy will either remain neutral or will be found on the side of Germany's enemies."<sup>4</sup>

Every step in the progress of Italy put her more under the power of France and England. "Italy's actual needs point in the direction of the Three Entente Powers. Italy's dependence on France and England has been increased by her establishing herself in Libya. Wedged between the two

<sup>1</sup> Tardieu, *France and the Alliances*, pp. 87, 88.

<sup>2</sup> Sazonoff's Memorandum of a conference with Poincaré in August, 1912. *Ent. Dip.*, p. 653.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter II and Appendix A.

<sup>4</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, June 1912.



Powers on the Northern Coast of Africa, Italy is more than ever in need of them.”<sup>1</sup>

When in 1911 Italy had to remove some of her home troops to Tripoli, it was noticed with satisfaction by the Russian Ambassador that she took away regiments on the French frontier and left those on the Austrian.<sup>2</sup>

Summing up, two things are perfectly plain. First, that the Triple Alliance was purely defensive, and second, that in a war in which England should be adverse, it was but a Dual Alliance of Austria-Hungary and Germany, and that it was probably no better after 1896 even if England should not be a belligerent on the side of France.

“From the earliest times,” says Hindenberg, “it appeared to me doubtful to rely on any effective help from Italy. It was an uncertain quantity. It was questionable even if the Italian statesmen favoured the idea.”<sup>3</sup>

The terms of the alliance by which the Central Powers sought to protect themselves against Russia have been public since 1888. The terms of the bad alliance between Russia and France of 1892 were never made public until after the commencement of the war.

<sup>1</sup> Russian Ambassador at Rome to Sazonoff, March 25, 1912. *Ent. Dip.*, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Russian Ambassador at Rome to Petrograd, October 24, 1911. *Ibid.*, p. 608.

<sup>3</sup> *Out of My Life*, vol. i, p. 98.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PEACE RECORD OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE

FOUNDED in 1871, the German Empire was able to boast to mankind in 1914 of forty-three years unblemished by war. During all that period until about the year 1912 Germany had the most formidable army in Europe.<sup>1</sup> By the war of 1870, forced upon them, as we have seen, by Louis Napoleon the German States achieved their unity, and from that time until 1914 they let every state in Europe alone. Before they achieved their unity few of the others would let them alone.

On the other hand, we have seen in our first chapter the confession of Jaurès, that as soon as modern France achieved her unity, she fell to assailing her weak, divided neighbours.

Crowded on the sidewalks of Berlin by haughty young officers though I indignantly found myself in former years, now that we have recovered our composure, the question recurs to me: If Germany was what we have been saying, the incarnation of militarism, actuated intensely by love of gain through arms, and nursing her people at all times to successful war, why did she not avail herself of her power during the period when that power was unquestionably the greatest in Europe? Why did she not seize Denmark? Why did Holland escape? Why Belgium?

Very justly do we condemn those German writers, who at one time preached world dominion and the superman, some of whom in the language of Burke may be called cannibal philosophers. Do we not forget, though, that many of them were dead long before the war, and that most of their excessive

<sup>1</sup> As has already been stated and will appear in Chapter X, the Germans ceased to have the greatest army in Europe toward the close of 1912, and in the commencement of the war in 1914 did not have a greater standing army than that of France alone.

talk had been uttered a generation with no attack by Germany on any other Power? Just as our Homer Lea and some like him failed to lash the busy American people up to a war fever, so these German philosophers grew up, preached, died and produced no wars. Officers in the German Army passed from boyhood to old age without witnessing more than the manœuvres of peace. As Repington remarked in 1911, the German nation was growing less militaristic. It was for the first time tasting riches.<sup>1</sup>

Unamiable though the Prussian often seemed to me, I do not see why we should shut our eyes to facts that are undeniable. We have been telling ourselves that for forty years Germany was preparing for a war with France, yet we have been overlooking at least three periods in which she did not even have to prepare, periods when she could have seized France with comparative safety and when others expected her to do so.

It is worth while to examine these three periods. The first was after the quarrel between England and France in 1898 concerning Fashoda. That estrangement was a violent one, so violent as to occasion the most serious talk of war. France at that time had no friend in Europe except Russia, whose armies in 1898 were but poorly developed. At that time the German Army was complete. As for England, not one particle of sympathy would have been extended to France. It is true no good pretext for a war at that time existed between Germany and France, but to what purpose do we say there was no pretext when we have been taught to believe that these Germans were a people who cared nothing for a pretext but only for an opportunity?

The second period was between 1899 and 1902, the period of the Boer War. That war, while it did not exhaust the naval resources of the English, enormously occupied her shipping, greatly increased her taxation, and was regarded, so little did we know of the cost of future wars, as a burden of the first magnitude. Nor had England at that time at all recovered from her perennial irritation toward the French and her special irritation about Fashoda. Salisbury was still in office; Salisbury always the opponent of France, always

<sup>1</sup> Quoted at some length in Chapter X.

the opponent of Russia. Here was an excellent chance for the sudden throwing of the great German military machine across the Rhine. Why was it not employed? We have to do, now, with a nation supposed to be lying in wait to assassinate or rob an ancient enemy, an enemy for that matter that had for nearly three centuries continually assaulted Germany, and yet we have to admit that Germany let France alone again.

The third opportunity was indeed a great one, so great that all the diplomats of Europe took notice of it. In 1905 the Russian Government was in a state of collapse, a collapse so complete that until it is detailed to the reader, he can have no conception of it. Count Witte says that on his return from the Peace Conference which terminated, at Portsmouth in the United States, the Japanese War, the Government had neither troops nor funds with which to fight the revolution. Only two things could save the dynasty, a large foreign loan and the return of the troops from Transbaikalia. The whole vast body of the Russian Army was in a state of complete physical and moral prostration. European Russia was practically denuded of troops. "We had at our disposal neither troops nor rural police." The policemen in Moscow often reported for duty with empty cases. There were extensive agrarian disturbances. Owing to the railroad strikes in European Russia and in Siberia, the Far East was often cut off from the rest for weeks together.<sup>1</sup>

Nor on this third opportunity was the pretext lacking, the affair of Morocco,<sup>2</sup> the affair in which Delcassé had wilfully deceived Germany in the preceding year. A serious occasion was this for France. Her Government had treated Germany with marked discourtesy as well as secret unfairness, executing simultaneously a public and private treaty in contradiction, and not communicating even the public one to Germany. It was a better pretext for a war than Louis Napoleon had in 1870, infinitely better.

So far as the French alliance was concerned, Witte made a report to the Tsar in 1906 as follows:

The international situation is at present such that Germany has an excellent opportunity to push France to the wall. Russia is not

<sup>1</sup> Witte, *Memoirs*, pp. 285-9.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter IX.



in a position at present to render any considerable military assistance to France. Austria and Italy will not stand in Germany's way. As for Great Britain, she is unable to help France on land, and there is no doubt that from the military standpoint Germany is perfectly able to give France a sound beating. The temptation to Germany is great.<sup>1</sup>

Isvolsky gives us also a picture. "The revolutionary movement," he says, "had resulted from the reverses of the Russian army in Manchuria, culminating in a general strike which not only stopped all means of communication, but also completely paralysed the economic life of the country. Violent disorders broke out in the provinces and the agitation assumed a menacing aspect throughout the Empire."<sup>2</sup>

The situation was so bad that Repington, looking back on it in his recent diaries, remarks, "It was Germany's chance."<sup>3</sup> It surely must seem unaccountable to some people that Germany did not think it worth while to hazard a war with all the chances in her favour and yet waited until 1914, when Russia had wholly recovered, when the French Army had been brought up to its highest perfection, and when Germany was wholly estranged from England.

Let us cite another Russian, Baron Rosen, on the condition of Russia in 1905 and the years immediately following :

Revolutionary sentiment had spread over all the country. News of riots and disorders was arriving from all sides ; mutiny in the navy, burning and looting of country houses ; strikes in all branches of industry, as well as railroads, posts and telegraphs ; all communication by rail, post or telegraph cut. In a word, a state of almost complete anarchy.<sup>4</sup>

It was at this desperate juncture that Witte began to search the world for a loan, and it is interesting to note that he applied to our Morgans in New York in vain.<sup>5</sup> That the Germans knew of his efforts to get the loan and did not assist him is also his testimony ; so they were aware both of the physical and political condition of the Empire, as well as its

<sup>1</sup> Witte, *Memoirs*, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Isvolsky, *Reminiscences of a Foreign Minister*, pp. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Diaries*, vol. i, pp. 2-13.

<sup>4</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, March 6, 1920.

Witte, *Memoirs*, pp. 303-5.

financial condition.<sup>1</sup> The loan was at last obtained through a French group of bankers who played the leading part with some assistance from England.<sup>2</sup>

When Brockdorff-Rantzau first saw Clemenceau at Versailles, he was able to look the unrelenting enemy of Germany in the face and to say that for Germany to admit that she was *solely to blame* for this war was not true. That Germany had her share in the general militarism of Europe he would not gainsay, but that she alone was to blame for the European catastrophe would in his mouth be a lie.

That the German people as a whole were peaceably disposed seems to be the testimony of all qualified observers. Even the bitter author of *J'Accuse* tells us that the great mass of the labouring population, the industrial middle class, the banking and manufacturing circles in South Germany not yet Prussianized, that all these, without doubt, desired peace. "In the middle of July, any one who had asserted in Germany that on August 1st we would be face to face with an European war would have been in danger of a lunatic asylum." He admits that the war party was formed only of a minority of the German people, and "that the policy of peace which the Emperor William had taken as a guiding line of conduct after the first stormy days of his youth had for long ceased to find favour in certain circles."<sup>3</sup>

Loreburn's opinion is that the commercial classes as a whole desired peace.<sup>4</sup> He continues :

Not only, were good relations growing between us, but we acted together in 1912-13. When the Balkan War of 1912 and its sequel, the Second Balkan War in 1913, brought about the imminent danger of a rupture between Russia and Austria, our co-operation with Germany became intimate and cordial. It prevented a general conflagration. Full acknowledgment was made on both sides by the ministers in London and Berlin.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Witte, *Memoirs*, pp. 298-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 293. This is the loan which was opposed by many of the liberal classes in Russia, who felt they could extort from the Tsar some concessions to liberty. They got a first but only consultative Duma. They wished to obtain a legislative Duma. This, had it been granted to them, would have preserved Russia on a constitutional basis through the union of ancient authority and a parliament. *Ibid.*, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> *J'Accuse*, pp. 134, 135. This unexpected concession in his attacks upon a people whom he still claims as his own is at this passage interrupted by a blank imposed by the censor.

<sup>4</sup> *How the War Came*, p. 91.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

This is the period at which, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> even the Russian Minister informed his own office that "if Germany wished war, she would not have done so much in this matter."

Lord Haldane bears his testimony to the same effect: "Notwithstanding all that had been done to educate them up to it, I do not think that the German people ever indorsed the implication of German militarism." There was in Germany, of course, a military party. There was in every capital of Europe a military party. Wherever there is a large standing army there will be some military hotheads along with some military wise men. But in Germany it seems to me that the militarists had always the best argument, since no other country was so cruelly exposed on its frontiers to instant invasion. How different the situation in France! Most of her exposure is on the sea, with few harbours and no large cities within range of guns. She is protected from Spain and Italy by high mountains. She has but one exposure, the German frontier, but Germany has an exposure on every side.

People during the recent war pointed gleefully to a document in which, as war approached, the German military party assured themselves that it was necessary that the people realize a sense of danger and educate themselves to a perception of impending war. Her foes, we know now, were actually preparing on both sides and with overwhelming force. Neither should we forget that even in our own secure country many people have felt it necessary at times to arouse our population to a sense of insecurity.<sup>2</sup>

Of course I do not mean to compliment the German people upon a peculiarly pacific disposition, since the bulk of the French people are peaceful too. This I do say, though, that there is in the French character throughout all classes something that can be more suddenly roused to war than there is in the Germans. They are more easily animated

<sup>1</sup> Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> I do not know any more striking instance than Homer Lea's *Valour of Ignorance*, in which he felt it his duty to alarm us about the Japanese on the other side of the Pacific. During the recent Disarmament Conference at Washington, one of the leading papers of New York, expressing the most violent discontent with those who were precipitant or extreme in their desire for disarmament, suggested that the Government would find some means of suppressing their agitation.

by brilliant writers and talkers to revive the perennial glory of France in arms.

But it is only natural that during the recent war little advertisement should be given of things favourable to the Germans. The Zabern incident, which I have spoken of before, has been given the widest circulation. Yet everybody forgets that in Germany itself this outrage was received with such indignation that the Reichstag broke loose in denunciation. When this public indignation has been mentioned, the circumstance again has been turned by our partisan feeling against the Germans, and some people have reasoned that the German military party plunged into this war against the most appalling odds, because they felt that militarism was expiring in Germany.

Such people can now read that there were other good reasons for this war. Undoubtedly there were some militarists who, perhaps, patriotically reasoned that, if the German military machine was ever to save the country from the impending attack of France and Russia combined, it had better be put to use without delay. Just as in the English Navy many patriots approved Lord Fisher's suggestion that seizing ("Copenhagening") the German Fleet would be proper without even a declaration of war, so in France, where the three-year military law was coming under increasing attack, there were undoubtedly pure-minded patriotic militarists who believed that France should go into and win a war over Germany without waiting longer.

Frequently brought up against Germany, next, is its refusal to disarm at a Hague conference. The hollowness of this proposal for disarmament, which arose in Russia, is cruelly exposed by Dr. Dillon.

"Isvolsky," he says, "who can, I am sure, bear out what I say, knew perfectly that the Hague Conference appeal was a shameful fraud which Maravieff and the Tsar were practising on the world."<sup>1</sup> Isvolsky in his book published two years later, *Recollections of a Foreign Minister*, though he discusses many other statements of Dillon and frequently expresses his high opinion of him, does not contradict this statement directly, inviting contradiction. Dillon, we may

<sup>1</sup> *Eclipse of Russia*, p. 254.



add, gives many instances of mendacity in Nicholas II and of a shifting of promises, together with concealment. His disgust for Nicholas II is extreme. Bogitsevich, Serbian *chargé d'affaires* at Berlin, also tells us flatly that the Russian peace proposal at the Hague was not in good faith, but simply to gain time.<sup>1</sup>

While the civil heads of the Government of France were, according to the testimony of the Ambassadors of their Allies, full of martial and fretful spirit, the civil heads of the German Government were unquestionably peaceful. Bogitsevich, who certainly was in a good position to observe and who, as a Serbian, must have felt at least impartial, assures us that Von Jagow was as peaceful as Kiterlen-Waechter, whom he succeeded in office in 1912.<sup>2</sup>

Turning now to the Chancellor, I have never found one writer who accuses him of being less than peaceful. Lord Haldane assures us that Bethman-Hollweg was sincerely averse to war.<sup>3</sup>

Many writers on Germany, especially some discussing Prince Bülow's *Imperial Germany*, have dwelt on Germany's desire in her diplomacy to maintain what they call the idle or pretentious thing, prestige. Now these people must think twice on that subject. The English and all other Great Powers are fully alive to prestige. Lord Haldane gives us an idea of it in a very unexpected illustration. He affords us a new glance at prestige :

We could not sit still and allow Germany so to increase her navy in comparison with ours that she could make other Powers believe that their safest course was to throw in their lot and join their fleet with hers.<sup>4</sup>

In a word, the larger planet draws the little orbs into her circuit and increases her immensity.

Let us take up finally the Kaiser, not, indeed, the successful tyrannical ruler of a Germany which at times could assert its feelings against him, but sufficiently the head of affairs to be reckoned responsible. What was his disposition? Was he in truth a martial or warlike man? My answer is that he may be called a military man in some senses, but was

<sup>1</sup> *Causes of the War*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Before the War*, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.

far from warlike. If the testimony of innumerable observers can be accepted, this man, during the last twenty years at least of his reign, exulted in peace and in the consequent prosperity and grandeur of his people.

I never can think of this exile, fallen from infinite glory, without recalling what Poultney Bigelow tells us of the simple lodge which the German Kaiser had at Romentin in East Prussia :

His study is a room of equal simplicity with the others, so arranged that should he arrive at an hour's notice, he would find it ready for work. On the table in front of him stands a little framed photograph of his wife.<sup>1</sup>

We see at a glance in this little picture two characteristics of the most powerful monarch in Europe, his domestic affections and his attention to business. The next picture I have of him, when I reflect upon his fall and the collapse of greatness, is his exclamation on his yacht when the news was brought to him of that murder at Sarajevo, which he well knew would place Austria in a ferment beyond his control. In the preceding year, as we have seen in this chapter, he had, with the aid of England, controlled Austria. Now he could control her no more, and when this news was brought to him, he uttered, according to Beyens, Belgian Ambassador, this tragic exclamation : " So my work of the past twenty-five years will have to be started all over again." <sup>2</sup>

In the history of the ten years preceding the war I fail to find one instance in which the Berlin Government behaved itself in a way provocative of war against France. In the question with England about the Bagdad Railway, Lord Haldane informs us, the Kaiser was most reasonable.<sup>3</sup> Another illustration occurs in January 1914, when there was composed a squabble concerning Germany's having a Military Mission at Constantinople on a basis somewhat similar to that of the English Naval Mission or representation there. The Germans

<sup>1</sup> *Borderland of Tsar and Kaiser*, p. 233. Bigelow's general impression of the Kaiser, though, is not flattering.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Beyens, *Germany before the War*, p. 276. M. Poincaré, in his very recent *Origins of the War*, admits that this same exclamation was reported to him by the Prince of Monaco. He finds in it something mysterious.

<sup>3</sup> *Before the War*, p. 63.

yielded the point. "I must needs testify," says the Russian Ambassador, "that the Berlin Cabinet has done everything in its power to fulfil our justifiable wishes."<sup>1</sup> I am not overlooking the action of the Kaiser in 1905 when, deceitfully treated by Delcassé, he insisted successfully that France remove her Minister. This action, far from being brutal, was proper, and had the Kaiser wished to go further, he had an excellent pretext for war during the terrible prostration of Russia.<sup>2</sup> The stupid error of the Berlin Government in not consenting to a "naval holiday" with Britain, whose rights to a pre-eminent navy is plain, I discuss in Chapter XIII.

"The promises," says Beyens, "which the Kaiser had made to the people when he ascended the throne as to keeping peace, he kept for twenty-five years."<sup>3</sup> Beyens also concedes that the monarch was sincere in his efforts to reconcile France,<sup>4</sup> though he relates that in later years the Kaiser grew tired<sup>5</sup> and told the King of Belgium at Potsdam in November 1913 that war with France was inevitable and close at hand.<sup>6</sup> The Kaiser, he adds, denounced the Press of Paris, an outburst which, to those who have seen in my first two chapters that part of it was in the pay of the Tsar and that the very diplomats of Belgium were complaining of the militaristic hotheads in charge of the French Government, may not appear unnatural.

Even M. Tardieu admits the repeated kindnesses and courtesies of the Kaiser in the early part of his reign, friendly advances, alas! to no purpose.<sup>7</sup> Nor does René Pinon in *France et Allemagne* decline to enumerate his early marked

<sup>1</sup> To Sazonoff, *Ent. Dip.*, Document, No. 836.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter on "Morocco." Professor Rose is one of the many who acquits the Kaiser of any desire for war on account of Morocco. *Origins of the War*, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> Beyens, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-4.

<sup>5</sup> As well he might after all the repulses he had received, and with Poincaré making such speeches as the one at Nantes in October 1912.

<sup>6</sup> Baron Beyens, *Germany before the War*, p. 36. It is regrettable that Beyens attributes this candour to a desire that Belgium join Germany. Had the Kaiser not thus advised the King, his enemies would have said that the deceitful fellow had been entertaining the King of Belgium while meditating his destruction. For my part, I see in his telling the King of Belgium what he did an example of his well-known impulsiveness. Of course, he knew that Albert would in all probability repeat this story to the French, which he did. *French Yellow Book*, 6, November 22, 1913.

<sup>7</sup> *France and the Alliances*, pp. 151-2. Poincaré admits it too. *The Origins*, p. 25.

civilities: the Order of the Red Eagle bestowed on General Billot; the sympathy in words "particularly well chosen" on Carnot's assassination; the invitation to a French Squadron to the opening of the Kiel Canal, and finally "his not concealing his wish for a *rapprochement* with France." As late as January 1914 Viviani prevented a prominent French public man from accepting entertainment from the Kaiser.<sup>1</sup> Why should he have done this? Why not let good humour be at least attempted?

Haldane tells us that the Emperor himself had said to him that, trying to cultivate friendly relations with France, he was finding it difficult,<sup>2</sup> and the late Lord Chancellor frankly states that he did not doubt that the German Emperor really desired peace, just as Bethmann-Hollweg did.<sup>3</sup> Those who believe that the Germans were maliciously warlike will have to accept universal testimony that they were not so when they were relatively better prepared for war. "Realizing the terrible danger of an armed conflict, responsible leaders of German policy have in general shown great moderation of late," says the Russian emissary at Berlin.<sup>4</sup> A Russian Ambassador tells us the same thing, people are surprised that Germany has yielded so gracefully to France on the Morocco question. "Cambon<sup>5</sup> tells me they are still wondering at Paris how the German attitude can be explained."<sup>6</sup>

We have even Sir Edward Grey testifying to his pacific disposition. "I do not believe that the Emperor William wanted war when this incident occurred."<sup>7</sup> I do not believe he wants war to-day."<sup>8</sup> Repington concedes as much. "My own opinion," he says, "is he did not wish for war, but was carried along by the tumult of events."<sup>9</sup> Von Tirpitz tells

<sup>1</sup> Paleologue in *Revue des deux Mondes*, January 1921, p. 231 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Before the War*, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> Russian *chargé d'affaires* to Home Office, March 20, 1909, *Ent. Dip.*, p. 493.

<sup>5</sup> Jules Cambon, French Ambassador at Berlin.

<sup>6</sup> Russian Ambassador at London to Home Office, January 28, 1909, *Ent. Dip.*, p. 487. Relatively Germany was better prepared for war in 1909 than in 1914.

<sup>7</sup> Sending of the *Panther* to Agadir in 1911.

<sup>8</sup> Grey to the Russian Ambassador at London, August 3, 1911, *Ent. Dip.*, p. 599.

<sup>9</sup> *Diaries*, Repington, vol. i, p. 18. The tumult of events was indeed a tumult, the mobilization of more than 2,000,000 Russians a few days' distance from his principal cities.



us that the Emperor's love of peace was "notorious," and he says :

When the Emperor realized the failure of his efforts for peace he was stirred to the very depths. An old confidential friend of his who saw much of him during the first days of August declared that he had never seen such a tragic and disturbed face.<sup>1</sup>

The peaceful turn of the man is in the very diplomatic documents now invoked against him. When toward the close of July the Serbians had yielded almost entirely to the Austrian ultimatum, the Kaiser was satisfied. He expressed instant and profound joy, and the very memorandum in his handwriting upon the Kautsky document bears the expression, "Now there is no need for war."<sup>2</sup> Most curiously of all, the very Yellow Book, the French, acquits him, for the expert who was reporting the state of public opinion in Germany for the French Government adds this significant clause, "Apart from the pacific disposition of the Emperor and Chancellor."<sup>3</sup> In fine, I think that it is difficult to discover among serious writers and observers a single witness to ferocity or warlike lust in this man's disposition. It was the misfortune of William II to be judged by his emotions and not by his policies. Even the angry Sarolea concedes, "I have no doubt that the Kaiser is perfectly sincere, and I believe him to be animated with the most cordial feelings for this country."<sup>4</sup>

I would not throw a halo around Wilhelm II, who had his full share of faults, but, as he had the disadvantage of being born to a throne, we must wonder that he had not more.

My own opinion is, that this monarch possessed most virtues that become a king. His worst fault was an inability to hold his tongue. Immeasurable mischiefs have come upon his country from his emotional expressions of ferocity and vengeance, which are contrary to what everybody tells us of him that was brought within the circle of his acquaintance, or that had to do with him in public affairs.<sup>5</sup> For these

<sup>1</sup> Von Tirpitz, *My Memories*, vol. i, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> See *Kautsky Documents*, No. 272.

<sup>3</sup> *French Yellow Book*, 5, Report of July 1913 to Pichon.

<sup>4</sup> *German Problems*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> The dentist Davis in *The Kaiser as I Know Him*, a book intended, I think, to give an unfavourable impression of the monarch, affords us infinite views of a really amiable character and of a man without any haughtiness in private relations. The English lady who became Princess Blücher gives many illustrations of the Kaiser's kindness in *An English Wife in Berlin*.

excited remarks Germany has had to pay, outbursts capable of being quoted with the most deadly consequences, just as she has had to pay for that military manner which in thousands of her officers vexed multitudes of travellers in Germany.

These travellers brought away a very natural, ineradicable dislike. They forgot or they did not know that, strong though the German military party was, the real heads of the Government were peaceful. They did not know, and until now we did not know, that during the whole month of July, while Germany was in the most imminent danger from the preparation of the Russian hosts, the civil Government of Germany kept affairs out of the hands of the military until the Russian mobilization had actually occurred, whereas in France the civil heads of the Government, the Poincarés, the Delcassés, and the rest of them, were all eager for war and doing nothing to prevent it.

What is known as the "Willy-Nicky" correspondence (between the Kaiser and the Tsar) shows that at one time the Kaiser endeavoured to bring the Tsar to his side by imputing dangerous schemes to England with little sense, considering that by a "naval holiday" he might have brought the sagacious islanders to his side.

There is one little incident which ultimately Englishmen will perhaps recall with feelings not disagreeable. When the Kaiser, during a visit to London, gave an interview to the *London Telegraph*,<sup>1</sup> he reminded England that during the Boer War he had been invited by both France and Russia to join in calling upon England to end the war. He telegraphed to those countries that he declined to do so. Then he telegraphed to Windsor Castle the negative answer that he had sent, and he reminded his English interviewer that in Windsor Castle at that time the telegram could be seen. I have never heard it denied that this is what he did, and it is known that, when Kruger afterwards sought an audience with the Emperor, it was refused. What has been remembered too frequently is, not these things that he did in a friendly way toward England, but that at one time in an impulsive way he sent to Kruger a telegram of sympathy. England afterwards

<sup>1</sup> October 28, 1908. *New York Times*; *Current History of the War*, vol. i, No. 2, p. 213.

found associates against him in war, who in the matter of the Boers had apparently been willing to be more hostile to her.

A pleasant incident in 1907 further illustrates the genial side of the Kaiser. A guest at Windsor Castle, he was considering a suggestion of Haldane's, then Minister for War, that England and Germany compromise the Bagdad Railway question by a certain concession to England on the Persian Gulf. After dinner they talked till past midnight, and, several prominent Germans joining them, Haldane would have left the room, saying pleasantly, "I find myself at a meeting of the Imperial Cabinet." "Come back," cried the Kaiser, "and be one of my Cabinet to-night." Haldane returning, the compromise was agreed upon.<sup>1</sup>

In the "Björkoe Treaty," which was to detach Russia possibly from France, I find no reason for censure, for by its terms it was to be made known to France. Russia and France were equally busy in seducing Italy from the alliance with Germany. Witte succeeded in having the memorandum cancelled.

<sup>1</sup> *Before the War*, p. 63. But on its being submitted to Grey, the latter would not confirm it without the voice of France and Russia. The Kaiser then declined.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE GERMAN STRUGGLE FOR UNITY

To most persons it would seem self-evident that wherever people speak the same language, have the same national customs and the same general system of law, they should unite. He would be a fool who should deny that Italy is happier because she is now one country ; a fool indeed who should wish to see France split into her original provinces, even though it might suit the convenience or promote the security of some other state to have her dismembered.

That German science and social progress were held back by internal divisions nearly two hundred years is well known. Indeed, her prostration under these discords has drawn, in every country except France, the tears of historians. But the evil was not simply an evil to Germany. It was an evil to all Europe. Large populations were repeatedly reduced to beggary, and that was a weak neighbour indeed which was not able to ravage some of the small governments until lately happy and prosperous in the German Empire. At one time these separate governments were as numerous as three hundred. Even by the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War, they were still ridiculously numerous, their boundaries confused by ancient and ill-settled claims, their frontiers still exposed to the rapacity of any other country that chose to violate them.

The great opponent of German unity was France, who, so long as she had the power, played against Germany, and, with some success against the rest of Europe, the very game with which she so loudly reproaches the English.

“The game of the French,” says Andrew D. White,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Seven Great Statesmen* p. 248.



"especially after Bonaparte had arrived, was easy; they played the Continental Governments against each other, bribing some, crushing others, and to prevent the larger states from becoming too powerful they grouped the smaller states and tied them by their ambitions to France, thus in due time creating the kingdoms of Bavaria, Würtemberg, Westphalia, the Confederation of the Rhine, and various petty satrapies in which hopes of gain from France were substituted for loyalty to Germany."

Let us not recount the wars of Richelieu and of Louis XIV against these helpless little countries. It is enough to remind the reader of Bonaparte, who tore up the country from time to time according to his whim. The kingdom of Prussia he once reduced from 5,000 German square miles to a little over 2,000, and from about 10,000,000 population to about 6,000,000, taking from her everything between the Elbe and the Rhine, and leaving her defenceless, while he exacted besides an enormous indemnity.<sup>1</sup>

In what way up to that time Germany had ever been a danger to France or in what wars Germany had assailed France is not pointed out by French historians.

Gradually among these German States there arose one which, after enduring the torments of repeated invasion, determined to create an everlasting weapon of defence. Prussia arose. A succession of kings, strong and tyrannical, yet devoted in an unparalleled degree to the good of their country,<sup>2</sup> gradually began to create a power, still inferior indeed to the great states of Europe, but not to be despised. Frederick the Great, equal in the cunning, surpassed the endurance of his unprincipled foes, and before the time of Bonaparte had erected a Prussian State upon solid foundations. This country, however, did not border upon France. Far from being any menace to that nation, it was on the contrary compelled to

<sup>1</sup> *Seven Great Statesmen*, pp. 248, 252, 253, 254.

<sup>2</sup> Henri Lichtenberger of the Sorbonne: "Prussia was guided to her destiny by a dynasty inspired by a high sense of duty, solicitous above all for the good of the state, living for their sovereign mission alone, for the greatness of the kingdom. Her nobility, bound to the monarch by ties of the most ardent loyalty, formed a military caste in which the virtues of the warrior were transmitted from father to son. . . . The Germans had an instinctive tendency to reconcile the principle of authority with that of free initiative of the subject." *Evolution of Modern Germany*, pp. 78-80.

guard its frontiers continually against dangerous kingdoms nearer at hand.

In Germany, at the end of the reign of Frederick the Great, there at last were two great states, Austria and Prussia. The former, as we shall see, came to be reckoned as foreign to the others, and in her declining glory could win to her side from time to time only such of the Northern States as might from various reasons be out of humour with the group in the north.

At the time of the French Revolution Germany was still a hopelessly divided country, and when Bonaparte rose to power nothing was easier to him than to wreck these disordered countries with a twitch of his arm.

But so terrible became the lash of Bonaparte, so insatiable the greed of France for glory and the spoils of war, that modern Germany may be said to have risen under her whip. The German Army, which had been dissipated, the military system which had been practically dug up from the roots by Napoleon, revived under attacks that knew no cessation. The modern German Empire may, in short, be called the creation of France. It was bred in suffering. The obedience of the Germans to military burdens, their willingness to be led by and to obey a single ruler implicitly, comes from the lessons of two hundred years. In no other way could Germany possibly live. To one man must largely be trusted the Government, since he, from the perils of the common situation, would probably administer Government well.

After the fall of Bonaparte, the Germans obtained some respite. France had at last been compelled, by the united energies of Europe, and by her own exhaustion, to abstain from her scandalous wars. There ensued a whole generation in which Europe was allowed by France to be at peace. In that period the German states began to consolidate themselves into a loose alliance, derisively and jealously watched by Austria, Russia and France. The sentiments created by this frail union continued to grow until it became apparent that there could ultimately be achieved a national unity. On the other hand, a new tyrant was rising in France. In the year 1848 that country, having again overthrown a monarchy and established a second Republic, in an evil hour attached to the

Presidency the ominous name of Napoleon. This new Napoleon lost no time in imitating the first. He overthrew the Republic with which he had been trusted and straightway devoted himself to those wars of which he had more in the same period than any other sovereign in Europe except his mighty uncle. In these ways the French so delighted that they forgave him the betrayal of a public trust.

Louis Napoleon at first amused himself with wars in Italy, and, as is well known, when that country under Cavour desired to unite, levied a blackmail upon her and stole a province. His patriotic eye was accordingly vigilant as to events beyond the Rhine, where the Germans, naturally disturbed by the rise of a second Napoleon, began to huddle together again in the common fear.

And now arose the gigantic talents of Bismarck. This is the man who was reproached with the expression "blood and iron" by people who do not understand that no other policy could possibly have succeeded. When states are hopelessly divided, when it lies in the power and the desire of powerful outside Governments to keep them divided by bribes and threats, there is but one policy, that of arms. Bismarck was right when he said that the question of German unity could never be settled by debates and votes. It could be settled only by war.

Almost equal to France as a disturber of German unity was Austria, who made it plain that the Northern Germans from the Danube to the Baltic could never be united so long as the Hapsburgs could have the controlling voice in German affairs. From this ensued a war between Prussia and Austria known as the Seven Weeks' War, which ended with the utter defeat of Austria at a place called Koeniggratz or Sadowa. The marvellous movement of the Prussian military machine, the completeness of its success, the prostration of ancient Austria, was a great surprise to Europe, and to no part of Europe a greater surprise than to France.

The contemptible Louis Napoleon now made clear that he would continue the French policy of preventing the definite union of the German States. "I can guarantee peace," said he to Lord Clarendon in October 1868, "only so long as Bismarck respects the present status; if he draws the South German

States into the Northern Confederation, our guns will go off of themselves." <sup>1</sup>

When a little later Baden made formal overtures for admission into the North German Confederation, the disgust of Louis Napoleon became undisguised.<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that Bismarck had to postpone the admission of Baden into the Confederation because admitting her would be the same thing as asking France to declare war against Germany, surely an extraordinary situation in which a whole country should be placed.<sup>3</sup>

The trouble was that the inflammable French people were behind Louis Napoleon in the calamitous step which he was about to take. "Revenge for Sadowa!" became the cry. That is to say, the French people wished to inflict some sort of punishment upon one of the German States because it had had a successful war with Austria, an infamous attitude which possibly can be pardoned in a people who had successfully imposed their will upon Italy in an exactly similar situation.<sup>4</sup>

When Louis Napoleon demanded from Prussia a "compensation" for Sadowa, he had to deal with a power growing even more rapidly than he reckoned, for Prussia had already added fresh German States to her side. Bismarck, however, did not refuse him. He led him on. Something of the kind, he intimated, might be considered. Would the Emperor outline a degree or shadow of a proposal, a proposal that should bind nobody, only furnish an idea for discussion? He was of course merely gaining time in which to see how he could deal with so irresponsible a monarch, whose insistent importunities for some bribe to acquiescence were presented to victorious Prussia on the very field of Sadowa.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dawson, *The German Empire*, vol. i, p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286.

<sup>3</sup> *The Evolution of Prussia*, by Mariott and Robertson, p. 361.

<sup>4</sup> "'Revenge for Sadowa' was the cry often heard henceforth. Its meaning was that if one state like Prussia should be increased in area and power, France also for consenting to it had a right to a proportionate increase. The hold of the Emperor on his own people was greatly weakened." Hazen, *Europe since 1815*, p. 288. In other words, the French people felt that Napoleon had not been sufficiently warlike already, and should have prevented, if necessary by a war, the victory of Prussia over a state in a local quarrel. Lichtenberger, though a Frenchman, frankly acknowledges that this was the policy of that day. *Evolution of Modern Germany*, p. 133. See Sybil's quotation of Thiers in *Founding of German Empire*, vol. vi, p. 217.

<sup>5</sup> "It is France which has been conquered at Sadowa," was one of the



At first Benedetti demanded no less than Mainz and the Bavarian Palatinate, and Bismarck, while evading him, drew these unprincipled negotiators into a suggestion that what the greedy Frenchman should take should be Luxembourg and Belgium. This piece of business was conducted by Bismarck with wonderful skill, for he actually induced the French Ambassador to outline a proposed treaty for the transfer of Belgium to France.<sup>1</sup>

Whether Bismarck at that very time had resolved that any such treaty should ever be signed is not clear. He would of course have been willing to allow France to have Belgium rather than that German unity should fail, but he doubtless believed that he could at last achieve the German unity and France not enrich herself by the seizure of Belgium. Later events have shown that it would have been better for Germany if Belgium had become a part of France and so not neutral. Bismarck, at all events, kept the memorandum, and when later Louis Napoleon forced upon Germany the war of 1870, he made the infamous proposal public through the *London Times*, to the utter extinction of any sympathy, if England had any, with so bad a neighbour as the Emperor of France.

exclamations of the military party. "Even before the preliminaries of peace at Nikolsburg had been signed, the French Ambassador to Berlin, Benedetti, had followed Bismarck to the Prussian headquarters, insistent to secure a 'compensation' for France. Bismarck put him off with fair words." Mariott, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 357, 358.

## CHAPTER VII

### OF RUSSIAN GROWTH AND THE GERMAN FEAR OF IT

“To the outsider,” says our late Ambassador Gerard,<sup>1</sup> “the Germans seem a fierce and martial people. But in reality, the mass of the Germans, in consenting to the great sacrifice entailed by their enormous preparations for war, have been actuated by fear.”

Had this truth been better known, we would have seen more reason why Germany plunged into this war, and would have shown her more toleration on the stern day of peace. Our people, however, have been grossly ignorant of European politics, and particularly of complications beyond the Rhine, for the overwhelming bulk of our travellers confine their little journeys, as I did my own first journeys, to France and England. The longer excursions are those extended to Italy, where one can enjoy the softness of winter amid incomparable accumulations of art. As for Germany, about one traveller in ten, I should say, goes eastward of the Rhine or Switzerland. We are not deeply interested in its mediæval history, which to most of us appears to have continued down to Waterloo. In fine, until Germany began to unfold the wonders of industrialism, very few of us sought the centre of the empire, the customs and traits of her inhabitants were largely unknown, and those who wandered into South Germany and Austria were chiefly students of music, desiring to see the haunts of Mozart, the Danube vocal with immortal strains, and the wooded hills where Schubert poured his melancholy soul.

It is accordingly necessary to enlarge somewhat patiently upon the peculiar geographical situation of Germany, and particularly her baleful proximity to Russia.

<sup>1</sup> *My Four Years in Germany*, p. 92.

If we look at the map of Europe, we see at once the strikingly advantageous situation of England, who needs only a fleet to excuse her people from the burdens of continuous conscription. Next, the situation of France. From Spain and from Italy she is protected by high mountains. The sea furnishes her a reasonable insurance against any other invasion than such as might be in its nature deliberate, slow, and exposed to favourable resistance. Only on one side, that toward Germany, has she any exposure. Spain is a country also well protected against invasion by land. Italy has nothing to fear if she can guard those mountain passes which seem to be created to protect her, nothing to fear except, of course, the guns of English battleships to which she is an easy mark. Russia seems to be free from exposure in every respect. It is true she has a long line of land boundary, but it is also true that the enormous depth of her country makes invasion of her as useless as invading the ocean; to such an extent indeed that it is doubtful if any Power would deliberately plan her conquest. Never has the conquest of Russia by Germany been seriously discussed, though Germany had the most perfect military organization since that of Bonaparte. Hungary is a country which though entirely inland has around her many high ranges of mountains. Austria enjoys too some security in that respect. It is Germany, and Germany alone, that has no natural frontier and yet is in the middle of different races. The eye of the traveller can nowhere discern by any natural object where Germany leaves off and Russia begins, and on the long line from Saxony to the Baltic the land constantly grows more level, so that the invader has nothing else in nature to oppose him than sands and woods, unless it be the furrows of the trembling farmer.

The country of Russia has had a rapid growth. It is not long since it was confined to a plain to the east of Poland and remote from the sea. In two hundred years it has increased in area from two hundred and seventy-five thousand square miles to nine million square miles, waxing in population in the same period from twelve millions to one hundred and fifty millions, so that it has been computed that, unless reduced by war or famine, it must within another century have a population of four hundred millions. Nor has it failed within the same period

to increase in riches. The revenues of two hundred years ago have multiplied forty fold. A popular writer has compared it to a glacier, "What it does not crush it erodes; what it does not erode it forces on into some crevasse. It moves on." <sup>1</sup>

This same writer has made us serious by enumerating the wars of this gigantic power. For the control of the Baltic he tells us it waged twenty-one years of war. Those were the great campaigns in which it pushed back to the Swedish peninsula that far superior people who have in the last war so greatly dreaded the possibility of Russian success. To gain Little and White Russia, required, he tells us, three wars with Poland. The conquest of the Black Sea borderland took four wars with Turkey. To establish absolutism in Finland called for a war of one year and fifteen months. To extend the Black Sea conquests later, as well as consolidate them, resulted in three more wars with Turkey, besides the Crimean War with the European Coalition. Then there were two wars to subject the Caucasus and the district of the Caspian, besides sixty-two years of war with the highlanders of the Caucasus. In Central Asia there were thirty years of war to establish to its satisfaction the Afghan frontier.

It is noticeable that this writer enumerates all this appalling progress out of a sympathy with the English, whose empire he fears must ultimately be disturbed. I do not recall a single one of his pages in which he expresses concern for the German peasants, their wives, daughters, and mothers, who have to dwell within the shadow of so vast a monster. What, we may ask, has England to fear from Russia except the loss of distant possessions that constitute a source of wealth, prestige, and power? No English islander has to tremble at the dreadful whisper that the Russians across the fields are arming for war.

The contest between the Teutons and the Slavs is not a new one. If there is a Teutonic people to-day, if there is a Germany that has been able to protect its citizens, to scatter its products over the earth and to contribute to the arts, sciences and erudition of mankind, it is because it has been able to resist stubbornly and bloodily the pressure of the Slavs.

<sup>1</sup> Homer Lea, *Day of the Saxon*, p. 106.



There was a time when the Teutons were pushed back almost to the Rhine, when valour at last turned the tide. It has well been said that the history of the Middle Ages in Central Europe is to a considerable extent the story of the reconquest of lands by the Germans from the Slavs. East Prussia was built up by just this heroic patience.<sup>1</sup>

And what kind of a people are these pressing continually on the ribs of those industrious Germans who, in whatever part of the earth they have been scattered, have given such proofs of industry, social progressiveness, and respect for authority? Let us take the opinions of Dr. E. J. Dillon, who undoubtedly has had the best opportunities of any European writer to study these people in all their relations of life, civil, social, and official, during a long term of years.<sup>2</sup>

Of the Russian Government he has a philosophic conception such as one might form by reading Montesquieu. He tells us that all its internal arrangements were adjusted to foreign conquest, which lent its policy a steadfastness and uniformity that were currently attributed to a grandiose Machiavellian scheme. "In a word, the development of Tsardom postulated a state of warfare with its neighbours." He gives a correct analysis of the only possible policy upon which such a despotism as that of Russia could continue, the policy of continued growth. In a state of repose it must die. No Russian dynasty could continue which did not pursue the policy of aggression. A Tsar might give up the predatory policy, but from that instant he must submit to those internal reforms which would either end the character of his power or throw the country into revolution.<sup>3</sup>

Nor did any change come on Russia with the mild character of Nicholas II. His mildness was that of evasion and mendacity. When he was not guilty of some deception, he was shifting openly from a former position, still a Tsar, still imbued with the

<sup>1</sup> Turner's *Europe Since 1870*, p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> Mackenzie Wallace had also great opportunities, which are reflected in his most excellent work, but in my opinion he was a far less discerning observer than the accomplished Dillon, who, it will be remembered, was during many years a member of the faculty in a Russian university, was intimate with the leading Russian statesmen, and was the Russian correspondent of English journals. He seems to have familiarized himself with every department of Russian affairs.

<sup>3</sup> *Eclipse of Russia*, pp. 23-9.

tradition of foreign conquest. "It was the old spirit of the predatory Tsarist state revived for the last time."<sup>1</sup>

Nor is Dillon, who had as good opportunity as any one to see whatever might be lovable in Russian life, more indulgent to the inherent temper of the race, of whom he says that, while richly gifted and with a keen, subtle understanding, and even with surprising quickness of apprehension, they have a "changeable temper, a capacity for fiendish cruelty comparable to that of the Redskins of North America." Numerous writers during the recent Revolution have told us of the abominations of cruelty to which the excited Russian masses at times descended. Dillon particularly instances their direct torture of officers after the fall of the Empire.<sup>2</sup>

The Russian is never settled. He is so frequently stung with the mania for travelling that it seems to be a call of the blood. He will sometimes rise up suddenly and wander for days or months or years. The lower orders are oftener possessed of this overmastering passion than their superiors. Love of destruction is inherent; only generations can expel it from the blood.<sup>3</sup>

Only those who peruse books of travel in Russia have any conception of the vile conditions under which its multitudes are willing to live and the uses that can be made of such creatures by unscrupulous leaders in war. Accustomed to the most wretched fare, they endure the hardships of campaigns far more easily than do the troops of the West; accustomed to obey, they yield quickly to the sharp oath of an officer. In fact, while they were the allies of France and England, these very qualities were matters of exultation in London and Paris. It is only lately that, through fear for themselves, the French seem to be considering that this ignorant docility

<sup>1</sup> *Eclipse of Russia*, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24. Dillon did not form his convictions of Russian depravity and weakness by the excesses of the Revolution, a period of madness from which many hasty conclusions have been drawn by shallow travellers. He had known them long. An eminent Russian diplomatist confirms his view, quoting with approval his own countrymen, Count Solytoff: "The weak and resigned Russian of Nesteroff and the raging and blasphemous Russians of Lenin are equally genuine phases of the same double-headed Russian. Nearly all Russian characteristics make for oppositions, anarchy and chaos. The Russian detests moderation. He does not like civilization." See Baron Rosen's "Forty Years of Diplomatic Life," *Saturday Evening Post*, February 14, 1920.

and valour might be a dangerous combination in a neighbour. Did I not lately read that M. Briand, in explaining why France has not reduced an army that, three whole years after the war, was still kept at eight hundred thousand men, reminds us that as the German wall is crumbling, the people of France have to prepare themselves against a possible inundation from Russia ? <sup>1</sup>

"It is a terrible power," said Frederick the Great to his brother, "and in half a century it will make all Europe tremble." A man must be hopelessly ignorant of German life not to know that the fear of Russia was the predominating influence in German militarism. For my own part, after innumerable conversations with German people as to how and why they bore the great military expense, I found them always coming back in explanation to their fear, not so much of France as of Russia. The bulk of the people, I found, were tired of militarism, but the talk would generally end with, "What are we going to do with France and Russia on either side of us ?" This was, in fact, the very remark which the Kaiser made to Lord Haldane in 1906. "A splendid machine I have in this army, Mr. Haldane, now, isn't it ? And what could I do without it, situated as I am between the Russians and the French ?" <sup>2</sup>

A very excellent little summary of the European question quotes an American as saying something which is very much confirmed by my own observation : "Shortly before 1914, an American familiar with Germany declared that the great majority of the Kaiser's subjects undoubtedly dreaded the Russians, despised the French, and hated the English. There is little doubt that the Germans lived in genuine dread of the great mass of Slavs stretching from their Eastern border to the Pacific. 'We never can defeat Russia,' they would say." <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Associated Press from Washington, November 9, 1921. "The only barrier is Poland." M. Briand was nervous notwithstanding several hundred miles of Germany and all of Poland lie between him and that charming people whose despot had lately kissed the President of France on the eve of an exalted war. I wonder how great an army would have made M. Briand feel safe had he lived in Brandenburg !

<sup>2</sup> *Before the War*, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Roots of the War*, p. 74. There was terrible force in Gortchakoff's comment on his country's good temper under reverses that, after all, could be but temporary. "La Russie ne boude pas, elle se recueille."

Not only did the Russian Government from policy adhere to a system of conquest, and, as Dillon said, live only on the principle of conquest, but the Russian people themselves were imbued with curious and absurd notions about their having what is called a mission to perform. There arose among them a class known as Slavophiles, whose purposes became more than a passing whim. Some were moved by religion, others by fantastic idealism, to spread their doctrines all over Western Europe, a favour which, if we may judge by anything they have recently introduced, would indeed be a calamity. We are told by a competent observer that the Russian feels that he is called to give to the world the Russian religious faith in all its purity, and that the lover of Russian institutions, going still further, proposes to bestow upon all civilization a new foundation in the shape of an autocracy.<sup>1</sup>

Isvolsky, in his recent *Memoirs*, reminds us of Danilevsky's *Russia and Europe*, a book which proclaimed in inflammatory terms the profound antagonism between Russia and the Occidental world and the inferiority of European culture to that of Russia. Russia, according to Danilevsky, should unite all the Slavs, a thing which could be accomplished only by an armed conflict not only with the Orient but with the rest of Europe. In this conflict the Greco-Slavs, led by Russia, "should establish the definite triumph of its civilization over that of the Germano-Roman people."<sup>2</sup>

To the sorrow of Germany and Austria, the political and religious sentiments of Russia united in a purpose to acquire Constantinople. From this, as is well known, Russia had been during many generations withheld by the patient and political friendship of England for the Turk. There came at last a time, however, when England could afford, for a season at least, to drop this opposition. That vigilant country had not

<sup>1</sup> Rudolph Martin, *Future of Russia*, p. 38. This author speaks of a belief prevalent at the time he wrote (1906) that Peter the Great, by his last will, consigned to the Russian people dominion over Europe and Asia.

<sup>2</sup> *Recollections of a Foreign Minister*, pp. 163-4. See also Geoffrey Drage's *Russian Affairs*, p. 43, and Leroy-Beaulieu's famous work. There is, of course, a distinction between Slavophilism and Pan-Slavism, the former being sociological and the latter political, but to my mind they end in the same thing. At the bottom of all Russian idealism is an intention to spread the *artel* and the stupid *mir*. The painstaking author of the life of John Marshall has given us a more amiable view of these Russian characteristics. *Russian Advance*, by Albert J. Beveridge, pp. 367 and 385.



failed to discern that as Russia required an outlet through the Bosphorus, so also did the Central Empires ; that a conflict of interests would naturally arise between Russia and the Central Empires, and that England need not be at the pains and expense longer to bolster the Turk. Be this as it may, the English did not hesitate to forfeit all claims upon the friendship of the Porte by the seizure of Egypt.

Now, it is impossible for Russia to accomplish the possession of Constantinople in the face of unfriendly Balkan States. Indeed, it was essential to her to make a conquest of those States, or if she could not make a conquest of them, that she make them her tools. There were accordingly prosecuted for a quarter of a century before the present war undeviating Russian intrigues in the Balkans. These were met, as was natural, by counter intrigues from the Central Empires, which last, in the prevailing ill-humour, have had to stand the reproach of a policy which seems to be more reprehensible when pursued by them than when pursued by the dastardly Government of the Tsar. It is in truth astonishing that Western Europeans could prefer in the Balkans the spirit of a Court swayed by Rasputin, Cyril, and Vladimir, to the spirit of Berlin and Vienna, which, whatever their faults, were at least not sunk in Asiatic debauchery, and were contributing to the arts, science, and culture of what we are pleased to deem our own valuable civilization.

Thus to the natural antagonism between races wholly different was added the ground of dissension that each must struggle for the same area of expansion. Fear everywhere prevailed throughout the Central Empires. Religion and territorial lust were combining to make one hundred and fifty million Russians, or bad men who could command them, covet the fat valleys of thrift and prudence in Central Europe, and since it was known that the richest people of Western Europe were furnishing arms and money in military alliance with these barbarians, it is easy to understand the anxiety at every fireside in Germany, and the pride felt in the army even by those who detested the glamour, pomp and waste of war. The very fact that two such wrangling neighbours as Austria and Hungary could combine with each other and both with Germany, whom they equally disliked, is proof to any

man of sense that there was a great and constant danger in the minds of all three.<sup>1</sup>

As for the Russians, it became a settled policy of their Court, expressed too often in language undisguised, that the road to Constantinople lay through Berlin.<sup>2</sup> This route, as we shall see later, they were preparing with the money of France in strategic railways, besides which fact their European army, which at one time had to be divided for Siberian Service, was, through the rapid increase of population in Siberia, becoming less under the necessity of being sent to the Far East.<sup>3</sup>

The policy of the Central Empires to maintain pre-eminence in the Balkans was one of necessity. Even if they did not desire to expand there themselves, they could not possibly allow Russia to do so. The Balkan States, if not acquired by the Teutonic countries, must not be acquired by Russia. Fancy the position of either Germany or Austria if Russia, with one arm around them on the Baltic, should extend another around them to the Adriatic.

Why do people waste time in saying that either Germany or Austria-Hungary was busy at the Courts of Sofia, Belgrade or Bucharest? Why should they not have been busy there? Was not a power infinitely more unscrupulous terribly busy there too? Instead of looking with hostility upon every Teutonic measure in the Balkan Peninsula, why should we not look with favour upon everything that could exclude from that region a power which menaced the civilization of Europe? Let the Germans, the Austrians or the Hungarians be hated as much as one will, there is still some common social basis between them and ourselves by which we can understand each other. They have our literary traditions, our art, and our music. Their philosophy of living is like our own. Essentially Western are their views of life and home and property.

<sup>1</sup> This is one subject upon which all writers on this topic agree. See, for instance, Fyfe's *Germany between the Two Wars*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Schmidt's *England and Germany*. This American graduate of Oxford will be found generally very impartial in his fairly extended review of the European complications. On this matter he cites the Russian Professor Mitrofanof, of St. Petersburg, who contributed in June 1914 an article to the *Prussische Jahrbücher*, which article and one by Delbrück he considers invaluable. Even Lichnowsky, in no good humour with the military party in his own country, concedes this. "In Russia, therefore, the opinion arose that the way to Constantinople and to the Mediterranean lay through Berlin." *Guilt of Germany*, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Frobenius, *Germany's Hour of Destiny*, p. 41.

The unanimous voice of travellers is that there pervades the Russian in every rank, class, and condition of society, a lack of good faith, an unwillingness to adhere to any principle at grave cost, a willingness to corrupt and to be corrupted, to buy virtue public and private, and to sell it.<sup>1</sup>

The extent of these vices is appalling enough in the lower classes, but it becomes more dangerous to mankind when discovered in those who have a right to put armed multitudes into the field. The royal grand dukes were, under whatever may in Imperial Russia have been called a constitution, sacredly exempt from the process of any court either civil or criminal. For murder itself they were not answerable to any tribunal. Their relative, the Tsar, alone could rebuke or punish them. One may imagine the lives of such unbridled creatures, to whom money must of course be the first of all necessities and insatiably desired. For money these men did and would do anything. Shame never could redden the cheek of a Romanoff.

A Russian writer has given a number of instances almost incredible of the corruption of some of these grand dukes.<sup>2</sup> Vladimir, he says, was made custodian of a fund for the building of a memorial temple to the deceased Alexander. Ten millions were collected, but after some years there was neither temple nor money, a fraud so gross as to excite a murmur even in that degraded empire. The Tsar, at last, unable to postpone inquiry, ordered an investigation. Vladimir, seeing that exposure was a certainty, required his secretary to acknowledge the general theft. The secretary recoiling in horror from

<sup>1</sup> The pecuniary corruption of the Russians is the complaint of almost every traveller. The policeman on the street expects his tip. A book-keeper will deny you access to the merchant until he has had his fee. The corruption of the Tchinovnik class, or bureaucracy, is so notorious that Russians themselves assume it an inevitable feature of official life. Even the Tsar had to laugh, it is said, when he first saw Gogol's *Inspector General*. That writer was equally felicitous on the same subject in *Dead Souls*, a work the gloomy title of which conveys no conception of its exquisite humour.

How infinite and involved was the corruption can be seen in what Baron Rosen tells us of Father Gapon, one of the few characters that we thought stood in Russian life for purity of ideal. In a very temperate article Rosen says that Gapon was "a contemptible personage who had begun his career in the employment of the secret police, had then joined the Revolutionary Socialists, had afterwards re-entered the service of the Department of Police, and ended by being hanged by the Revolutionists as a traitor to their cause." "Forty Years of Diplomatic Life," *Saturday Evening Post*, January 31, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> Ular, *Russia from Within*, *passim*.

what would be both a lie and his own damnation, Vladimir upbraided him with lack of loyalty to the House of Romanoff. The poor creature still shrinking from such odium, the royal scoundrel intimated the use of the secret administrative process, by which the subject is arrested without right of trial in the courts, hurried off by the police, and inquiry silenced for ever. The end of course is obvious. The secretary, rather than accept permanent life in some wretched cabin in Siberia, gave up his honour, assumed the shame, and escaped with a comfortable exile of five years.

The same author tells us another story of the greedy Vladimir. There was a demand during the Japanese War for further gifts by the public to the troops and their families, whereupon there was assessed a large sum indeed to a certain manufacturer of clothing in Moscow. This tradesman had the sturdiness to refuse to give more. When pressed, he explained that his first contribution had been half a million roubles in clothing, all of which, far from going to the soldiers or their families, had, he discovered, been on sale in other Moscow shops within a week after he had made his gift. He would not say what royal or honourable gentleman had pocketed the proceeds, but he would not give more. The knaves who had robbed him then proposed to send him to Siberia, or put him possibly in the fortress of Peter and Paul if he should continue to be obstinate. He stood his ground successfully, for he reminded them that if he went to prison his factory at least would not continue to run.

When Kuropatkin, Ular continues, was preparing for the Japanese front, he was unable to find some special batteries of Creusot howitzers, and at last had his curiosity gratified by discovering that this equipment had been some years before taken from the Imperial arsenal under the order of a grand duke and pawned to one of the Balkan States.

These things seem incredible, but still we remember, all of us, how Cyril went to the Japanese front with a trainload of harlots and cargoes of champagne, how Admiral Rojestvensky's wake from the Baltic to the Sea of Japan was easily traced by myriads of bottles.

A people led by scoundrels and debauchees may not indeed achieve the greatest results in war, but he must be a dull man



indeed who does not see that a people led by scoundrels like these will very frequently be in war. The natural occupation of despots is war. From war people with such unlimited powers derive profits proportioned to their mercenary characters. Every contractor pays them tribute. No movement can succeed without contribution to them. All stand in dread of them and will pay to escape their displeasure. All who hope for promotion can reach eminence only by submitting to their extortion.

Thus the Teutonic people were on their native soil continually called upon to raise a barrier of their bodies against a half-Asiatic horde led by the most unscrupulous of mankind. Between Germany and Russia there was not and could not be anything in common. The rudest German farmer of the coast of East Prussia was capable of raising and creating agriculture as a science among the lazy, tipsy and sordid moujik on the Russian plains. Nor was anything more contemptible than the belief of these that they had a superiority over the Germans and the people of the West. Dostoievsky, expressing the self-satisfaction of the *intelligentsia*, might revel in this fancied superiority and find words with which to express it, but the people around him were but a herd. "The character of the Russians," he says, "differs so greatly from that of all the other European nations that their neighbours are really incapable of understanding them. Russia is a country which resembles Europe in nothing. How can we expect Russia to be enthusiastic about a civilization which she has not created?"<sup>1</sup>

The prejudices of races against each other are, of course, irremovable, and in their origin inscrutable. The more useful the Germans showed themselves to the Russians, the more they were despised, for no race will by accepting the instruction acknowledge the superiority of another. It consequently only made matters worse that the German farmers, wherever they have settled in Russia, have set examples of thrift and

<sup>1</sup> Gregor Alexinsky's *Russia and Europe*, p. 305. This Muscovite writer, formerly a deputy to the Duma, is fairly well satisfied with his good people. The reader can get a fair account of some of the Russian stupidities, and particularly the institution of the *mir*, in Stepniak's *Russian Peasantry*, and Mackenzie Wallace has also a clear general account. After reading very many books, the Russians seem to me very like our rural negroes, utterly improvident, lazy, fond of strong drink, but good-natured when not frenzied by drink or by some sense of wrong.

industry and that their larger settlements are oases in a vast desert of slovenly husbandry. Their very excellence increased the discontent against them.

It must be borne in mind that Russia never had a feudal aristocracy in the Western sense, the virtues of which have in so many lands more than offset its vices and which has so often created civil liberty for all in the defence of itself against a tyrant. No error is more common than that the Russian nobility resembles that of England, say, or of France or of Germany. For example, there are no great old castles in Russia. A nobleman's country estate is a poor thing indeed to look at. Isvolsky, in his *Recollections of a Foreign Minister*, gives perhaps the best description of what he calls the "Provincial Nobility."

Poultney Bigelow quotes an instructive conversation with one Alvenstorm, who, though his family had been for two hundred years resident in Russia, was under some disfavour by reason of Swedish ancestry. The Russian peasant, according to Alvenstorm, disliked the Courlanders, a good farming class of German stock brought in by the Russian landlord, but jealously watched by the peasants. The Courlanders had become obnoxious "for getting on in the world. The Russian peasant, in a country where land is sold for almost nothing, finds himself crowded out by a strange people who convert swamps into meadows and become rich in lands which they have always regarded as waste."<sup>1</sup>

Thus far I have said nothing about those sombre aspects of Russian tyranny that must have been at all times in the minds of the East German population. To fear foreign rule is bad, but to fear it in the shape of a gloomy despotism is infinitely worse. To be in dread of an alien police in your streets, magistrates speaking a strange tongue in courts of justice, swaggering assessors and collectors of taxes and inquisitors violating with strange oaths the immemorial customs of your race—this, I say, is agony.

But what shall we think of those who to such fears have to add the apprehension that all this base machinery will be spurred to exaction by universal corruption? Nay, more:

<sup>1</sup> *The Borderland of Tsar and Kaiser*, p. 267. On this subject see Chapter II of Annette Meakin's valuable *Russia*.

what if you have to fear that a conquering tyrant will bring in a system which denies you the right of trial, a tyranny that can at any time pronounce your offence one solely for the executive department, remove you from your home by a process called administrative, hold you without trial, without arraignment and without even the knowledge of any friend as to where you are, as to where you have been removed, and in what you are supposed to have offended?

Such was the Russian system even under Nicholas II. A husband and father, for example, is called from his dinner table by a knock at the door. He returns deadly pale. The secret police are there. On what errand they will not say except that he must go with them to prison that night without so much as communicating with a friend. Not to-morrow, now! No warrant, no explanation, only an order from the executive head of the district. The next day the unfortunate man's wife or other relatives beseech an interview with him. It is denied. Later perhaps the secret police will concede it. The thing is an affair of Government. It belongs to the Imperial department at St. Petersburg. Friends call to inquire. They even persist. If they get any answer it is that in a few days the department may feel free to give an explanation. At present it is doing them no good to meddle in this way, for the department knows too much. If they wish to keep themselves out of trouble they and this man's family had best let the matter drop. But where is the prisoner? No matter. The Imperial Government will do him no harm. Be quiet, or you will get into trouble yourself. Your husband has had the misfortune to get into bad company and the Imperial Government knows it.

Horrible nightmare, under which thousands of honest, hard-working men and women have been hurried to Siberia or to the gloomy prison of Peter and Paul, and from which escape was possible only by bribery in high places, themselves not accessible without the applicant's submitting to blackmail to begin with. Under these circumstances what would one do but tremble at the thought of being accused? You would shun in conversation the very topic of public affairs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I remember the story of an American who happened to remark in a drawing-room to three Russians that a certain prominent official was in his

From the time when a friend disappeared under administrative process, nobody asked questions or introduced his name. It was not safe to talk of him and was unfair to your friends to put them in a position where they could not deny that there had occurred a conversation concerning him at which more might have been said than was admitted. The victim entirely disappears. He never was.

Looking at this tyranny, the shadow of which overspread the greater part of Germany, the humblest German knew one thing. In Germany he must be charged with an offence ; charged with an offence, he must be tried for it ; tried for it, he was sure of having trial in an open court.

And under the Russian system what punishments, just God ! What horrors ! That long, deathlike march from home to desolation, from life to the living tomb ! That horrible monument marking the dividing line between Europe and Asia, at the sight of which the banished fell prostrate in woe ! Those convict barges on the half-frozen streams, those rafts which neither a Dante could imagine nor a Doré depict ! This was the Government which Germany had to fear, which France was supplying out of her unlimited resources with arms for war.

Did not the Germany of at least the Baltic Provinces expect that in a successful war by Russia these lands would be annexed to that dark empire ? Does anybody doubt that they would have been annexed ? Who could have stopped Russia ? Would the Allies even have felt inclined to stop her ? Had Russia, then, no incentive to a war which would have gained her the lovingly tilled soil from Tilsit to the Oder ? Mild prophecy indeed !

opinion ultra-conservative. " By no means," exclaimed all three with great haste, " he is a most liberal man in his views." The surprised American a little later happened to have a chat with one of these three Russians alone when he was assured by him voluntarily that on account of the presence of the other two he had not been able to be quite candid. " Yes, — is as you say an ultra-conservative man, very conservative indeed." This led the American to detach another of the group who whispered, " Now, to be frank, — is extremely conservative, in fact just a bit reactionary, but it would not have been discreet in me to make such a comment when more than one other person is present." To have admitted that the official was conservative would have been a remark which, if repeated, could be misconstrued and placed in connection with other remarks as unkindly criticism. Thus the thing would lead on. Spies were everywhere. The third Russian afterwards unblushingly confessed the same to the American.



Has the reader at hand George Kennan's famous book? Let him turn to a certain interview which he describes as having occurred in a wretched cabin on the everlasting snow, an interview dangerous to him and to two exiled women. The pathos of that scene will linger long in the reader's memory. The women had almost lost the power of speech in the long cold monotony of their isolation. Kennan knocked at the door and whispered identification. "She looked at me for almost a minute in silence and half incredulous amazement." But why describe what only tears can tell? "For being present at the time of an armed resistance to the police, although she had not participated in it, Miss Armfeldt suffered fourteen years and ten months of penal servitude, with deprivation of all civil rights and exile to Siberia for life."<sup>1</sup>

Nor was all this abandoned under the gracious Nicholas II. Do not be deceived. With trifling relaxations it went on. Those who moulded the public opinion of the world soon, on account of their alliances with Russia, found means to keep this horror from being so talked about,<sup>2</sup> but it went on. For instance, the case of Catherine Breshkovsky, released only by the Revolution. A refined, highly educated woman, she was compelled to trudge to her chill cabin a thousand miles, one of a party in which there were only two women among one hundred criminal men. This fine creature was at last considered harmless in a snow-covered hut one hundred miles from any other of her own sex.<sup>3</sup> Was she released by the late Tsar, the amiable Nicholas? No.

Just across the water from the Germans was also the example of Finland. Unhappy country, detestably betrayed! No monarch ever more unblushingly lied by breach of faith. The Finns, happy in their local self-government, had given him no offence and were upon the whole the most prosperous part of his population. It was, however, time to move westward. Their ancient privileges were accordingly ruthlessly annihilated, annihilated contrary to the express promise of the Tsar. The head of their affairs, freely selected by themselves, was

<sup>1</sup> *Siberia and the Exile System*, vol. ii, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Dillon's comments and those of Bertrand Russell on the quick decline in publicity against Russia after the alliance of France and the friendly relations of England with that Power. Chapter III.

<sup>3</sup> Her life can be found in a book called *The Little Grandmother of the Russian Revolution*, p. 98.

impatiently deposed, and in his stead was set up a thorough tyrant of the brutal school of Petrograd. The tears and sighs of that unhappy people it is needless to describe. Their tears and sighs did them no good, for Russia was moving on to Sweden.

The peculiar hardness of the Russian soldier is equalled by his stolid indifference to death, which, according to all accounts, it is besides extremely difficult to administer to him. An incident during the Moscow campaign of Bonaparte is related by Constant. He says that they came upon a Russian who, having lost both legs, had hollowed a dead horse for shelter against the wind, and during the Japanese War I remember an account of a Russian who, being wounded, fell, where he remained half exposed to further bullets, of which he received forty through his legs and arms afterwards without collapsing. They are the last extensive race out of barbarism. They possess only that low nervous system which might be expected from such as can endure a long winter in one room with a cow, a horse, and a numerous family, amid a stench at which a European turns sick.

"Under Souvoroff and Koutesoff," says an English military correspondent, "the Russian soldier withstood the best troops of Napoleon, and frequently defeated them. If the Poles, Finns, Caucasians, Little Russians, and the inhabitants of the Baltic Provinces are loyal and give no trouble, Russia should not only be able to inflict a crushing defeat on Germany, but might also annex Galicia and the Slavonic provinces of Austria." Elsewhere he remarks, "Even if she should by chance be defeated, it will only delay the day when she will be the predominating Power of Europe."<sup>1</sup> This writer has the felicity to live in an island possessing the greatest battle fleet in the world.

"William II listened long and intently as I developed the many reasons for his stepping forth in 1891 as the champion of Western civilization against the barbaric tendencies of Russia."<sup>2</sup> Here we note one of the earliest discussions of the Yellow Peril which the young Kaiser did not plainly perceive

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Army from Within*, W. Barnes Steveni, pp. 34, 169 (1914).

<sup>2</sup> Poultney Bigelow, *Prussian Memories*, p. 106. William expressed a belief that the two monarchs could keep the peace. It was in 1891 that France began her combination with Russia.

in 1891. Most of us laughed at him subsequently when he did see it and warned us of it, warned us of it after French money had armed so thoroughly the rough hordes of Russia.

Never was that peril far removed from Germany. It was the black cloud that continually hung over her and against which various Prussian kings had been able to guard their people by dynastic influences. In another chapter we have seen Witte's own story that before the war of 1904 between Russia and Japan his country was so near going to war with Germany as actually to prepare her field organization for movement and to select her principal commanders.<sup>1</sup> What manifestly prevented this was the diverting of their belligerency to Japan, an enterprise in which it is lately the habit to impute the Kaiser with encouraging the Tsar. If this last be true, those who know how terrible an anxiety Russia was to Germany, how traditional it was in the German Court to keep from quarrelling with Russia, how diplomatic and personal friendships alone have kept this dangerous giant off the tempting soil of Germany, will do the Kaiser the justice to say that in turning the greed of Russia away from his own land to some far distant field he was acting in a manner patriotic and natural.

"It is difficult for us to understand how real the Slav peril appeared to Germany and Austria," says Lord Haldane,<sup>2</sup> who distinctly attributes the Great War to the Teuton's apprehensions of Russia. He must be a dull or prejudiced investigator who in respect to this last comes to any other conclusion.

Iteration and iteration is necessary to enforce at a distance the fact of extreme tension all along the frontier between Slavs and Germans. The German people believed themselves in the widest sense engaged in a never-ending struggle for the supremacy of a higher over a lower civilization.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Witte, *Memoirs*, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Before the War*, pp. 91, 219.

<sup>3</sup> Sloane's *The Balkans*, p. 254.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE

AS may be seen in an appendix, this treaty was arranged in the years 1891 and 1892, that is to say, about thirteen years after the alliance of Austria and Germany against Russia, who had become estranged from the Central European Powers by the Congress of Berlin. About the latter alliance there was no longer any secret, for it had been published in 1888. Italy had indeed become a member of that union which thenceforth bore the name of the Triple Alliance, but a member poorly bound.<sup>1</sup>

There was nothing in the latter or the spirit of the dual alliance of Austria and Germany to begin with, or in the later Triple Alliance to give France a particle of alarm. On the contrary, the union of these Governments was natural against the expanding power of colossal Russia.

Nor had France up to 1892 a single act of the Germans to reproach them with or to consider as a menace to her safety. Twenty-two years had passed since the Prussian victory at Sedan, in which period the German Empire had been rejoicing in peace, was obviously fond of peace, and was observing that peace was as profitable as war. There was growing up in Germany, moreover, a strong anti-militarist faction who, feeling that Germany had at last attained her union and was safe, were willing to discard that sterner system of government and of military organization which centuries of misery had taught them was their only protection. Fortunate, indeed, had it been for Europe

<sup>1</sup> See the concluding part of Chapter VI. Not bound against Great Britain at all, or against France if the latter and Great Britain became allies.



if the French temper had permitted them to avail themselves of this growing sentiment in Germany. What the French did was to take just that course of action which placed this sentiment at a hopeless disadvantage in Germany, and enable the military party to justify itself by unanswerable arguments in a sustained policy of arms.

It was only in 1875 that there had occurred any event in Germany which might give alarm to France. The incident is known as the war scare of 1875, to which I have made allusion before, and which was nothing more than a burst of Bismarck's anger at what he deemed the machinations of the French politicians.

Seventeen years had now passed since that affair. The friends of France may in vain be challenged to produce one act of Germany which would justify their allying a free and popular Government with that dark despotism which no writer has found words adequately to describe. To link France to the country of the Azeffs and the Plehves, of *agents provocateurs*, of the Bastille of Peter and Paul, and of the icy prison huts of Siberia, was an act unjustifiable at the time and a crime under any circumstances short of invasion and despair.

France was in point of fact at that time an exceedingly prosperous country. As for Germany, the young Kaiser had come upon the throne in 1888 only to offer, and speedily offer, every overture for future friendly relations with his neighbour west of the Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the treaty has a progressive history. As first formed it was to be a defensive alliance, at least such on its face, against anything that might be done hostile to France by the Triple Alliance. This, however, was not enough for M. Delcassé. In the year 1899 that statesman, whose name is inseparably linked with the consequent miseries of his country, made a visit to Petrograd, where he achieved what he considered a great diplomatic gain. As will be seen in the appendix, he reports it with no small satisfaction. He had been afraid, he relates, that the union with Russia might expire when the Triple Alliance expired, a condition of the engagement. M. Delcassé, however,

<sup>1</sup> See the chapter on the "Peace Record of the German Empire."

did not feel that the alliance with Russia ought to terminate when the only thing it was to provide against, or which could possibly justify so base a union, had also expired. It would be too bad to have it expire when France was safe. It ought to continue when some one else would be too weak to resist it.

In reporting to President Loubet in August 1899 he asks what would happen "if the Triple Alliance should dissolve otherwise than by the volition of its members; if, for example, Emperor Franz Joseph, who seems at times the only bond between rival and even enemy races, should suddenly disappear; if Austria were threatened by a dismemberment, which perhaps is after all desirable, which perhaps might be countenanced, and which in any case *one might become anxious to turn into account*. What could be more capable of compromising the general peace and of upsetting the balance between the European forces? and what situation, furthermore, would more deserve to find France and Russia not only united in a common plan, but ready even for its execution?"

Now, a man must be wholly unacquainted with the language of diplomacy who does not perceive in the foregoing an evil intent. If, Delcassé reasons, the Triple Alliance dissolves, France and Russia should be able to take advantage of the weakness of the Central Powers. Austria and Prussia he admits are not particularly friendly to begin with. When Franz Joseph dies the alliance may fall apart, Italy, of course, having no particular fondness for Austria at any time. A people inclined to peace would say that this would be a good opportunity for France, with its exalted ideas of freedom, to rid itself of its alliance with the debauched court of St. Petersburg. Delcassé, on the contrary, thinks that is just the time when France ought to rivet this chaste alliance more firmly and "turn it to account."

Gleefully, therefore, he invites the commendation of President Loubet by reporting to him his success in inducing that friend of freedom, the Tsar, to continue the alliance with France even after the Triple Alliance may dissolve. Nor can he wholly conceal, even in the language of diplomacy,

the rascally business at which he aims. Referring to the new bargain that he has made, he says :

The arrangement of 1891 is solemnly confirmed, but the scope is singularly extended ; *while in 1891 the two Governments expressed anxiety only for the maintenance of the general peace, my plan provides that they shall concern themselves just as much with the " maintenance of the balance between the European forces."*<sup>1</sup>

It is not surprising if M. Delcassé's happy emendation of this document became known to the Germans. At Paris, as de Blowitz once remarked, the very fishes talk.

Those who know the temper and the subsequent history of Delcassé, those who are aware of the deceitful and dangerous trick which he played upon the Germans in the Morocco transactions, and the ferocity with which he always bore himself towards the Germans in debate, will not be surprised that this alliance with Russia finally took the turn of an intentional assault upon Germany. To be sure, there were obstacles to be overcome. Between the royal families at Berlin and St. Petersburg there existed, even after the Congress of Berlin, a great deal of friendly intercourse, and the aristocracy of the two countries had upon the whole remained friendly, but every year was bringing the situation to a point more favourable for revengeful action by the French. As for Russia, she must, of course, sustain herself by foreign wars. No other policy was possible to the principle of her existence. But from a war on Germany she was deterred a long time by many circumstances, not the least among which was the power of the Triple Alliance to resist her. In 1904 she was diverted from what might have been an attack upon the Central Powers only by her ambition to seize a dominating position on the north of China and the Pacific Ocean.

<sup>1</sup> Delcassé's language connected an avowedly defensive to an avowedly offensive arrangement. Neither do I see what M. Poincaré means by the innocent terms applied to the original treaty, " preparatory diplomatic accord." That treaty was an alliance of arms.

The intentions of Delcassé are so plainly mischievous in this thing that I am not surprised to find M. Poincaré in his recent book gliding over this amendment as swiftly as possible, yet I do not see with what regard for fairness he can, though refraining from quoting Delcassé, briefly dispose of the transaction with the words, " M. Delcassé deemed it prudent that it should remain in force, like the preparatory diplomatic accord of 1891, as long as the common interests of the two countries demanded it." *Origins of the War*, p. 56.

There were always those in France who distrusted this Russian engagement, and to quiet their discontent it was the common habit of the Chauvinists to raise a cry about the evil intentions of Germany. But again I say it is impossible to discover in any German act a hostility greater towards France than was displayed towards Holland or towards Denmark. For some reason this very belligerent German people were not attacking small and weak states with fine and useful harbours.

I have previously referred to the profound secrecy in which the Russian Treaty was kept during thirty-two years. Even when the war came it was not disclosed, for its arrangement of joint simultaneous action, of military continuous collaboration and the like did not sound well to a considerable section of the French people who believed that Russia was making use of their country. M. Poincaré, disturbed by such criticism and anxious to appease it, makes the matter worse by relating that so great was the candour of his administration that Viviani, addressing Parliament, had a copy in his pocket which he did not show because invaded France no longer cared. That is exactly the argument, though, against the Poincarés.<sup>1</sup>

"France," says Jaurès, "has lost all control of the alliance; it is Russia alone which fixes its meaning; it is Russia alone which determines its direction; she can transform a pact of mutual guaranty into a pact of adventure, of which France is to pay the expense and the Russian Tsar to collect the profits."<sup>2</sup>

Baron Rosen, though a Russian, quotes with approval Earl Loreburn's argument that under the Franco-Russian alliance France had an implied right to forbid Russia to precipitate the war by mobilization. He recalls Jaurès' urging France to notify Russia that if she mobilized without French consent, France would not be bound. Still more interesting is Rosen's admission that Russia was not bound to intervene for Serbia and thus get into the war at all.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Origins*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Vie de Jean Jaurès*, by Charles Rapoport, Paris, 1916, p. 72. This work being published during the war was necessarily much limited in expression. Its author has not pressed upon the reader the many vigorous public utterances of Jaurès to delay military action.



As will be seen in a later chapter, he concedes that Russia was not really a Slav state.<sup>1</sup>

From the first year of the alliance Russia began to help herself to the lion's share of the profits. Once that paw got within the French Treasury, the door never could be closed against it. What other fate has a banker who makes a reckless loan to unscrupulous debauchees? By the year 1906, with the assistance of the active Financial Publicity Syndicate and the chorus of a well-paid Press, Russia had obtained from France in general flotations no less than two and one-half thousand millions of dollars. How much besides she got on private undertakings will never be known, nor am I aware how much was added of a public sort between 1906 and the beginning of the Great War.

It was a vast drain on the resources of France, which must thenceforth lend more or lose all.

In the year 1905 the debtor was in almost total financial collapse<sup>2</sup> and on the verge of revolution, but the energy of Witte, along with the helplessness of the creditor to refuse, procured more money. The bankrupt was again set upon its feet, and from that time became more than ever the master of France, following only the injunctions of the latter as to using the bulk of this money in the equipment of a vast new army and navy and the building of strategic railways to the German frontier.<sup>3</sup>

A deplorable bargain, fraught with inevitable ruin to mighty states! The fund from which that new indebtedness was to be repaid was no longer doubtful. It was to be, in the Russian mind at least, the spoils of Germany.

Is it possible that the French Government was ever unaware of that object, that it was ever without hope of

<sup>1</sup> "Forty Years of Diplomatic Life," in *Saturday Evening Post*, August 21, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> See the details in the chapter on "The Peace Record of the German Empire," where it is shown that all military experts expected Germany to take advantage of an unexampled opportunity to crush France when the latter could not have obtained a single army corps from Russia.

<sup>3</sup> It is always to be borne in mind that the Russian gauge is wider than the German gauge. Assuming what soon occurred, the creation of an overwhelming Russian army, these forces would have two advantages. They could be poured into Germany on these new railways, and yet if they fell back the Germans could not adapt their own railway equipment to pursuit. The retreating Russians would, of course, destroy so much of the Russian railway equipment as was not necessary to convey them back to safety.

liquidation through such a source? Where had the first French loan been spent by Russia? In war—war on Japan. What had been the history of Russia in preceding centuries? A long tale of expansion by stealth or assault. After she was checked on the Pacific, in what direction did Russian ambition turn? Had not French politicians heard that in Petrograd “the road to Constantinople lay through Berlin”? Did the French not suppose that Russia desired to be and would be a richer country and better able to repay her loans if she did seize the whole German coast as far as Hamburg, or if, following the absorption of Finland, she seized at least the Scandinavian Peninsula?

Into what an abyss of blood and misery have sunk the appalling total of the savings of France! Millions vanished at Mukden, millions at Tannenberg.

But it was reserved for one of the greatest masters of prose to foretell the sorrowful end, to warn France at the outset, and to hold up to mockery the incestuous marriage of a free government to a despotism. Let us hear the voice of Tolstoi. Well may France and Europe recall to-day one of the greatest exertions of his intellect.<sup>1</sup>

The French and Russian peoples, he related, had had a knowledge of each other during many centuries without many emotions of love or hate when of a sudden, because the officers of a French squadron drank and ate enormously at Kronstadt, and because a number of Russian officers ate and drank enormously at Toulon, the two races discovered that they loved each other devotedly, that there was a strange bond of union between them, that they were so near and dear to each other that nothing in the future could ever divide them or make them have the least misunderstanding.

“In France,” he continued, “the people would burst into tears at sight of a Russian sailor, salutes followed salutes, the national hymn of each was learned by the other, vast dins of joy accompanied the tramp of Russian feet; great banquets and concerts and merrymakings in the streets, in the greens, and in the gilded halls, reminded the cheerful guests that never had such a union as this

<sup>1</sup> “Patriotism and Christianity.”

been found among nations. So vast were the crowds that persons were often crushed to death in the struggle to get a glimpse of these beloved Russian sailors. During the whole fortnight the festivities were prolonged, every detail of which was set out, even the endless menus, in the daily Press. 'Long live the Russian Emperor! We love him and peace.' The *Marseillaise*, denouncing tyrants, followed the battle hymn of the Romanoffs. Telegrams by the thousand were flashed across Germany to loving Russia and back to loving France."

*All the French suddenly became extraordinarily religious and carefully deposited in the rooms of the Russian mariners the very images which a short time previously they had as carefully removed from their schools as harmful tools of superstition, and they said prayers incessantly.*

But this great genius who employed with such terrible force the irony of Swift in the style of the Scriptures, still does not desist from portraying the hypocrisy of this alliance.

Besides the throwing of flowers and various little ribbons and the presenting of gifts and addresses, the French women in the streets threw themselves into the arms of Russian sailors and kissed them.<sup>1</sup>

I have not space for more of this wonderful piece of writing, except for his awful and prophetic quotations from certain French school-books which taught the little boys of France:

*It is for you, boys in our schools, to avenge the defeat of your fathers at Sedan and Metz. It is your duty, the great duty of your life. You must ever bear that in mind.*

But let me not forget one weak voice of truthful warning, to which France at that time should have lent a willing ear, "An Open Letter to French Students," from the United Council of Moscow Students.

These receptions represent a sad but we hope a temporary condition—the treason of France to its former great historical rôle. This

<sup>1</sup> We all remember with what emotion French women fell upon such of our troops as first arrived in France, kissed them and wept. They were at that time upbraiding these same Russians for not continuing longer in a war in which millions of Russians had died under this abominable alliance. Perhaps they had even forgotten that Paris had been saved in 1914 by the enormous armies which Russia poured into East Prussia with greater speed than even German sagacity had deemed possible.

antagonism [to Germany] keeps all Europe under arms and gives the deciding vote in European affairs to Russian despotism.<sup>1</sup>

Only by a miracle has Europe escaped conquest of its greater part by the Russian arms, a catastrophe that would indeed have been a fulfilment of the prophecy of these humble students. How much of Europe the Tsar would have taken, had he been victorious, we know now by the rapacious Secret Treaty with France made during the war.<sup>2</sup>

What shall be said of a nation's having self-control or love of peace when it taught its little boys revenge for defeat in a war so wrongfully declared by itself as that of 1870, condemned even by its own historians?

But there was wrong besides which France signally did to the Russian people. In 1905 a great turning-point had come in the Russian political development. The Russians still had a Tsar whom they by tradition would obey. On the other hand, they were trying to develop a free government through a Duma or national assembly lately conceded. The Tsar, in his financial prostrations, must either get money from French bankers or yield to the Duma's demand for constitutional government. Then might have come, as in the case of England and some other countries, a gradual development of civil liberty and constitutional government through the quiet, gradual struggle of the multitude, led by the *bourgeois* against the Crown, the latter yielding from time to time and yet preserving the ancient authority. The Tsar implored France for money. That money was for a soldiery which should make him independent of the Duma. That money he got from France, in spite of the protests of the Russian liberal. These were disdained. France preferred the continuation of despotism in Russia to any weakening of the power of her arms and the authority of a tyrant.

To the wickedness of this alliance in itself must be added these frenzied jubilations. What other agreement between nations was ever celebrated in this delirious, offensive way?

<sup>1</sup> *Tolstoi's Works*, edition by Du Mont, article on "Patriotism and Christianity," p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix D.



Of all the treaties ever made how many were accompanied by more than official congratulations? The purpose of all that noise, those parades, those frolics, those tumultuous rejoicings, those cataracts of fireworks, was to taunt a people whom these merry-makers hated and wished to insult and whom they nearly encircled.

Again, one asks how long can the French people, with that inflammable temper of theirs, be trusted with power? How long have they ever possessed, without abusing, great power? Examine their history.

I cannot forbear adding here a curious infelicity of observation in that really great writer Romain Rolland. It is in his *Above the Battle*, when, replying to a reproach by German savants that France should have allied herself to such a Power as Russia, he says that the Germans quite under-estimate Russia. What great spiritual voice had Germany lately produced? "Look," he says, "at Tolstoi." Had he forgotten that awful denunciation by Tolstoi of this very treaty? Great wits, it is said, have short memories. They are charming, these French, these children whom we dare not trust with loaded weapons.

We have not done yet with the evils of this alliance. Russia has fallen, but remorseless France demands her money. France, having squandered her fortune in an evil love, upbraids her paramour in his bankruptcy. Of all peoples of the world none has shown to Russia so little compassion. While all mankind has pitied Russia in her prostration and has tried to help her, France screams for repayment by a corpse. Resolutely does she discountenance any government in Russia which, though it may help the people of that country to rise again and so promote, besides, the general restoration of Europe, will not promise to France repayment in full of loans made to a tyrant for the extension of tyranny.<sup>1</sup>

She will have her money though the Continent collapse. Even her own history she ignores in her rage. France

<sup>1</sup> I have shown little enthusiasm for the Russian people, but in their misery I have pity, and must remark that while all the other Allies have tried to help starving Russia, France has done nothing. Poincaré has to admit this truth to the Chamber of Deputies. *New York Times*, February 17, 1922.

that once rose in honest rage against foreign monarchs that would have forced back upon her the system she had overthrown; France, that perpetuates in her inspiring battle hymn the wrong they did her, heartlessly arms against Russia in a similar revolution every force that she can purchase or gather together, equipping adventurers, organizing new nations to assail Russia on fancied principles of liberty, which at the same time she is ready to surrender at the first payment on an immoral debt.

The country that dishonoured its *assignats* trembles with indignation at the impoverished rouble of an impoverished partner in military adventure.

Of Russia it can at least be said that she tried to keep her bargain. By a million of her dead boors she saved Paris at the outset of the war. Eight hundred thousand of her soldiers poured into East Prussia in a time so short that even German vigilance did not forecast it, and Germany was saved only after the ravage of half a province. The German position was so desperate that the battle against such great odds was perhaps saved by one of those accidents that occur in war. According to Hindenberg the enemy's plan was found in the pocket-book of a dead Russian officer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hindenburg had to hurry to meet *Rennenkampf* and the auxiliary Russian army with only 200,000 men. His opponents had approximately four times that number in two armies. *Out of My Life*, p. 108.

## CHAPTER IX

### MOROCCO

As the Congress of Berlin in 1878 began the estrangement of Russia from Germany, so the treaties between France, England and Spain concerning Morocco in 1904, began the estrangement of Germany from France and possibly from England also. That the Germans were unfairly treated and that upon the whole they behaved themselves with considerable self-control cannot be doubted by any man who is at the pains to read history. Indeed, this is confessed by many writers not friendly to that country. France took the path of war in Morocco.

Not to go back too far into the French connection with Morocco, it is sufficient perhaps to say that France, having established colonies in Algiers with considerable success, looked with natural longing toward the attractive region westward along the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. That littoral is a far more fertile region than might at first be imagined. Separated from the Sahara by high mountains, it is, though a warm country, not what would be considered a hot one, as the climate is relieved by the breezes of the Atlantic. In general, it may be said of Morocco that it has the situation of Southern California in latitude, in exposure to a western sea, and in a lofty ridge behind which at once separates it from the hot blasts of the interior and furnishes the resources of irrigation.

As early as the 'eighties the eyes of several European countries had fallen upon Morocco, still an independent Government under its sultan. The policy of the open door, as it is called, had not only been acquiesced in but formally announced, and was part of the public law of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Morocco in Diplomacy*, p. 18, the most exhaustive work on this affair.

The chief interests in the country, so far as trading was concerned, were those of France and England, but it is not denied that Germany, too, had an interest there and that it was a growing one. At all events she had been reckoned as a country always to be taken into account and consulted with in anything which might disturb the independence of Morocco.

Up to the year 1904 it would require ingenuity, indeed, to prove in the attitude of Germany towards France a single hostile intent or even a gross discourtesy. That the French would have nothing to do with the Germans beyond what trade intercourse compelled them to, is equally clear, though thirty-four years have passed since they had failed in a war unjustly declared by themselves against the country beyond the Rhine. So far from settling down to what may be called common sense, so far from reconciling themselves to their powerful and prosperous neighbour and securing with her that union which would have made France safer and richer even than she was, the French retained a resentment. The time now came when they first had an opportunity to gratify that ill will. It was in 1904 when England, turning from her old enmity against Russia, was more disturbed by the rising power of Germany.

The French Government, under Delcassé, decided to leave Germany out of an arrangement about to be made with the Sultan, but whether this idea came of his own aggressive mind or was suggested by England will probably never be known. No matter by whom it was suggested, and I think myself it arose entirely in the brain of Delcassé, a man of the most combative temperament, it at all events should have been rejected by the French as a policy too dangerous and wholly unprovoked.

What happened was that in April 1904 two treaties were made by the Governments of France, Spain, and England concerning Morocco. One of these treaties was made public, the other kept secret. The public treaty assured the world, which of course included Germany, that the open door should remain, or, in diplomatic language, that the integrity of Morocco should be respected. The



secret treaty gave the country over to the ultimate domination of France.<sup>1</sup>

That the Germans heard of this deception within a year may be surmised. 1904, it will be remembered, was the year in which the Russians embarked on their disastrous campaign in Manchuria. By the following year Russia was a country in positive collapse.<sup>2</sup>

She was utterly unable to help France in any way whatsoever, and as has been seen this collapse afforded Germany an opportunity for a declaration of a successful war against France. In 1905 the Kaiser took occasion to assert the rights which, notwithstanding this deception, Germany possessed. In April he himself made a visit to Tangiers where, in exchanging civilities with the Sultan, he assured him that he might count on Germany as an upholder of the integrity of his empire. He next brought before the French Government with sufficient emphasis the trick that had been played upon him, behaving, I think, very much as our own country would have behaved if in case of any arrangement to secure the open door in China, deception of the same kind had been practised upon us. As for the French, they could not defend the actions of Delcassé. He was censured by the most eminent men and in public debates. He was humiliated and had to resign.

But here we must note a curious consequence of his removal. Germany, not desiring to drag English diplomatists into the broil and, by exposing any impropriety on their part, create friction across the Channel, gave to the deception no peculiar publicity. The consequence was that the part of the British Press that was hostile to Germany was able successfully to sympathize with the French as a people imposed upon. The public, in other words, being kept in ignorance of the secret treaty, which was the real wrong to Germany, could not help thinking it unfair in Germany to resent the public one which secured the open door. The English Press was little disposed to air at great length a transaction so dubious, the more especially as the reason for England's going into business was that she desired to

<sup>1</sup> The contradictory treaties can be seen in *Morocco in Diplomacy*, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> See the extent of this collapse in Chapter V.

settle those differences with France regarding Africa that had been continuous since the disagreeable incident of Fashoda in 1898.<sup>1</sup> The English people believed that there was no other treaty than that that had been published. They were in a humour, consequently, to be suspicious of the Kaiser's complaining about anything in Morocco, when everything in Morocco had been so fair, and his visit to Tangiers seemed, instead of the natural thing that it was, a very unnecessary display of power.

This affair of 1905, the removal of Delcassé, is what is termed the first crisis over Morocco.

The complaints of Germany, instead of taking the violent form of war, ended in her proposing conference and arbitration. This, achieved at Algeciras in 1906, ended in a manner entirely satisfactory to the French, and it is conceded by all writers that the behaviour of Germany, after the decisions there made more or less adverse to her, was extremely dignified and peaceful.<sup>2</sup> However, as Beyens tells us, Delcassé's behaviour started the final dissensions between France and Germany. Nobody could expect the Germans thenceforth to trust the policy of France. In a long chat that Haldane had with the Kaiser the latter said plainly that Delcassé's plan has been to create a quarrel which would force England to take a permanent and open stand with the French. On what that meant with Russia arming he remarked, "There are no Himalayas between Germany and Russia."<sup>3</sup> Pinon dates the "second stage" of France after Sedan with King Edward's visit to Paris in 1903, and Loubet's return visit, in which he was accompanied by Delcassé. *La terrain d'entente est trouvé ; c'est le Maroc.*<sup>4</sup> True, indeed !

We come now to the *second* crisis over Morocco. This occurred in 1911 on account of a French expedition to Fez,

<sup>1</sup> It is generally supposed that the "encircling policy" of England began with this negotiation. Edward VII had come upon the throne in 1901. In 1902 Lord Salisbury, who held the anti-Russian and anti-French traditional policy of England, had resigned. In 1903 King Edward had visited Paris. In 1904 Russia had collapsed and Germany had become all powerful. It was a natural time for English uneasiness to begin.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra* this chapter.

<sup>3</sup> *Before the War*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>4</sup> *France et Allemagne*, p. 127. This second stage he assigns to 1898-1911, "l'arrivée de M. Delcassé au Ministère des Affaires étrangères."

an expedition hard to justify upon any grounds and generally condemned as an unnecessary attempt of the French to encroach<sup>1</sup> upon the country through a police jurisdiction which they had been allowed by previous convention, the Act of Algeçiras, to which I shall recur.

The excuse made by the French is a very poor one, and on account of alleged wrongs to a handful of Europeans under circumstances that make it doubtful that there were wrongs committed on them at all, they exacted a relatively enormous indemnity.<sup>2</sup>

We must bear in mind that the English public were still ignorant of the secret treaty, and so when the Kaiser took a certain very foolish step, a great ado was made about it in England. In July of 1911 the Kaiser had sent a small ship, the *Panther*, to Agadir. And now there was, indeed, an uproar in England. Lloyd George was among the most irritated. In a very famous speech he set all Germany by the ears by reminding them that England was a country which was disposed to protect her rights. Here we can see the mischief of the secret treaty. The English people, ignorant of its existence, could well become vexed at the Kaiser's meddling in a military way with a country where his rights seemed already secured by the signature of England. A more lamentable instance of the mischief of secret diplomacy can hardly be imagined. As for Lloyd George and his speech, which at that time did a great deal to estrange Germany from England, I believe he was in perfect good faith. Not being in the Foreign Office, he was in all human probability entirely ignorant of the secret clauses, which (through the Paris Press) did not leak out to the public until November of that year.

The effect on Germany was not doubtful. She knew perfectly well that a trick had been played upon her by the French. Nor are we left uninformed as to the estranging effect of this business. Baron Beyens, the Belgian Ambassa-

<sup>1</sup> See Lord Haldane's *Before the War*, p. 69. He confesses "to a certain sympathy with the German perturbation at the time." As to the Fez expedition see *Morocco in Diplomacy*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> After bombarding Casablanca, France exacted \$12,000,000 to cover the costs of the Moroccan occupation, though the trouble had arisen over the heavy taxation. Thousands of Moroccans were shot in the insurrection. *Dip. Rev.*, pp. 121-2.

dor, has left us his very intelligent comments, in which he describes to us how he could see the change of feeling come over the Germans. "I was able," he says, "from personal observation to gauge the width of the irreparable breach which it had made between the two countries."<sup>1</sup>

That the Germans behaved with great self-control is admitted on all sides. "We have already remarked," says Professor Seymour, "that one of the chief qualifications of William II is his capacity for making the best of an unpleasant situation. This self-restraint he exercised admirably during the Moroccan crisis."<sup>2</sup> Two Russian Ambassadors acknowledged the pleasant behaviour of the Berlin Government during the settlement of the second controversy over Morocco. The Kaiser was "resolved not to let it come to war," and "the French Minister for Foreign Affairs does justice to the moderation shown by Germany."<sup>3</sup>

It is a good test of writers who discuss the cause of the recent war how they refer to the secret treaty of 1904. If they omit or do not reasonably discuss the secret part of the treaty, they must be viewed with caution. This perhaps would not apply to Lord Haldane, who in his book makes no reference to this secrecy, but who was in such a situation with his fellow-statesmen at the time he wrote that he could hardly refer to this feature. Sir Thomas Barclay, who represented the English in the business, admits the secret clauses without explanation, adding that they were "known not only to the British and French Foreign Offices, but were communicated to the Russian Government as allies entitled to know, and to the Spanish Government, whose consent to the possible partition was one of their conditions."<sup>4</sup> As to the German equanimity, in their

<sup>1</sup> *Beyens*, p. 217. The effect of this on German popular feeling may be judged in England by the extreme irritation there upon the French treaty with the Kemalists in 1921, made without information to England.

<sup>2</sup> *Diplomatic Background of the War*, p. 176. See Rose's *Origin of the War*, p. 80. Rose sympathizes with the Germans about the Fez expedition and thinks the *Panther* incident not improper. See Professor Priest, *Germany since 1740*, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> October 13, 1911, Russian Ambassador at Berlin, and October 25th Russian Ambassador at Paris. *Ent. Dip.*, Document No. 706-7.

<sup>4</sup> His page 278. Poincaré boldly discusses "Morocco" and yet says not one word about the *first* crisis, the one involving Delcassé's deceit. See *Origins of the War*.



ignorance, he says, they were so friendly as to invite him to a banquet at Hamburg. "If England had responded to the German tender of friendship instead of treating it with scornful indifference, there might have been no German rivalry to-day in naval armaments."<sup>1</sup> The German interest in Morocco he regarded as substantial.<sup>2</sup> I do not agree with Barclay that rivalry with Germany in naval armaments could have been defeated by any candour respecting Morocco, because the heart of the Kaiser was unquestionably set upon a great fleet, an ambition the most unfortunate conceivable.

Most writers who are frank condemn the whole transaction. "It was not a creditable business for the negotiators," says one American investigator. "Whether and when Germany learned of the secret articles cannot be said. Thus while the world was led to believe that Morocco's position would be maintained intact by France, Spain, and Great Britain, those very Powers were privately agreed that the Sultan's dominions should be divided among two of their number, and the third was pledged to give its diplomatic support."<sup>3</sup>

I do not think that the English themselves gained a great deal by the Moroccan business. It is probable they did not expect to derive much benefit. What they were accomplishing was a wise settlement with France upon differences of long standing. That settlement gradually led to their ultimate union with France in the Great War. It was their first real approach to the Triple Entente into which they further proceeded when, Russia collapsing, a fear of Germany began to arise.

We may now retrace our steps a little and give the reader the two letters which transmit and confess the secret engagement of 1904, contradicting the public one.

<sup>1</sup> *Thirty Years' Reminiscences*, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276. Barclay quotes from the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* for March 25, 1904, as stating itself quite satisfied with "the repeated assurances given officially on the French side that France had in view neither conquest nor occupation but merely to open up the sultanate to European civilization," which, of course, it could not have expected if it had known of the secret clauses of partition.

<sup>3</sup> *England and Germany*, p. 23.

*The French Ambassador to the English Foreign Minister.*

"DEAR LORD LANSDOWNE,

"I am instructed to communicate to you the arrangements which have just been concluded between France and Spain on the subject of Morocco. They were signed on the 3rd inst. by our Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Spanish Ambassador at Paris; they consist of a general Declaration, which will be made public, and of a Convention, which is to be kept secret.

"M. Delcassé, in instructing me to forward to you the text of this agreement, in accordance with Article 8 of our Declaration of the 8th April, 1904, pointed out the confidential character of this communication, and instructed me to request you to be *good enough to keep the Convention entirely secret.*

"I have, etc.,

"PAUL CAMBON."

*The English Foreign Minister to the French Ambassador.*

"DEAR M. CAMBON,

"I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of to-day's date, covering the two documents which you had been instructed to communicate to me in accordance with Article 8 of the 'Declaration respecting Egypt and Morocco' of the 8th April last.

"I need not say that *the confidential character* of the 'Convention' entered into by the President of the French Republic and the King of Spain in regard to French and Spanish interests in Morocco *is fully recognized* by us, and will be duly respected. The shorter paper, or 'Declaration' made by the two Governments is, I understand, public property.

"With best thanks, I am, etc.,

"LANSDOWNE."

The foregoing was, as I have said, in 1904. In 1905, to repeat again, the Germans, taking a proper advantage of the collapse of Russia, insisted that France do something to rectify what they either knew or suspected to be a deception. After the Kaiser's visit to Tangiers, he caused the Sultan of Morocco to invite that conference which resulted in what is known as the Act of Algeçiras in 1906. By this Act two things were accomplished, one favourable to Germany, the other favourable to France. By the former the integrity of the Sultan's empire was strictly and clearly pronounced. What the French gained was a certain right of police, a force of approximately 2,500 men, which should be raised "under the sovereign authority of the Sultan," and distributed in

eight ports of commerce, with approximately sixty French and Spanish officers to assist in the organization. As to the Algerian frontier, the enforcement of the regulations concerning that were to be the exclusive concern of France and Morocco, and where Spanish neighbouring possessions might be affected, the affair should be the exclusive concern of Spain and Morocco.<sup>1</sup>

Not one word can be found in the Act of Algeçiras which would impair the integrity of Morocco or close to any Power the open door of commerce, but if anything were to make this more clear, it is an agreement which France and Germany themselves entered into in 1909. That document, known as the Franco-German Declaration respecting Morocco, is brief and clear. After reciting that each Power is anxious to carry out the Algeçiras Act, it says :

*The Government of the French Republic, firmly attached to the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Shereefian Empire, being resolved to safeguard the principle of economic equality, and, consequently, not to obstruct German commercial and industrial interests in that Country :*

And the Imperial German Government, pursuing only economic interests in Morocco, recognizing on the other hand that the special political interests of France in that country are closely bound up with the consolidation of order and internal peace, and being resolved not to impede those interests :

Declare that they do not pursue nor encourage any measure of a nature to create in their favour or in that of any Power an economic privilege, and that they will endeavour to associate their nationals in affairs for which the latter may obtain a concession.

JULES CAMBON.

KIDERLEN-WAECHTER.

There is no evidence as to when the Germans learned positively of the secret treaty. That they had a clear inkling of it is plain from their conduct in the year that followed it. As I have stated before, they would have every reason for making no public exposure of the deception in its details, for it would tend to alienate them from England, with whom the Kaiser was at that time on very amiable terms. Delcassé for his part did everything he could to keep up the deception. When the German Ambassador

<sup>1</sup> *Morocco in Diplomacy*, p. 29.

in Paris, Radolin, approached the subject while it was still in a state of negotiation, Delcassé glibly assured him: "But you already know our point of view on the subject. We wish to uphold in Morocco the existing political and territorial status, but that status, if it is to last, must obviously be sustained and improved." Of course there was no other status at that time than the one of the open door.

Baron d'Estournelles de Constant in 1912, remarked :

The French Parliament, by an abuse morally if not constitutionally unpardonable, was kept in ignorance of this policy. Far from insuring general peace, the arrangements of 1904 tended to compromise it. Why was the French Parliament told only half the truth when it was asked to pass its opinion upon our arrangement with England? Why was it not allowed to suspect that this arrangement had as its complement and corrective some secret clauses and other secret treaties?

And de l'Amarzelle was still more emphatic :

This secret Franco-Spanish treaty interests Spain no doubt, but it interests still more England, by whom and for whom it was made. Why was this secret treaty hidden?

The venerable Ribot says :

In 1904 the treaty was signed, the secret treaty whose clauses we have only recently learned. It was a treaty of partition and has created difficulties which are not yet all cleared away.

Moreover, that Delcassé meant to give Germany a clear affront is unmistakable, for he did not notify the German Government even of the public treaty. This is an unpardonable omission in diplomatic usage. It was the English who for their part performed this proper act of courtesy. We shall see, too, that notwithstanding the rights of Germany, recognized in the Act of Algeçiras and by the Special Declaration between France and Germany in 1909, the French proceeded, certainly so soon as Delcassé returned to public life, to a policy of aggression in Morocco incompatible with these engagements. The expedition to Fez was the most marked but not the sole incident in that policy.

Delcassé! Name memorable for ever in the tears of France! This is the man who in 1899 had exultingly



extended, and boasted that he had extended, the Russian alliance beyond an ostensible arrangement for defence to a secret alliance for offence, extended it "from the mere preservation of peace" to a pact that could be "turned to account" if Austria and Germany should separate.<sup>1</sup> The Belgian Ambassador made no mistake when, in his confidential advices to his Home Office, he classed Delcassé with Millerand and Poincaré as the fomenters of strife against Germany, in which little Belgium would be sure to suffer.<sup>2</sup>

French apologists have endeavoured to make England as guilty as themselves in the concealment of the secret clauses. I do not agree with these. The whole settlement was infinitely more important to France than to England. From start to finish it was a French gain secured by the intrigues of Delcassé, a part of his policy of estranging permanently the English and the Germans. Lord Lansdowne may be blamed for silence about the clauses; Delcassé must be blamed for the invention of them, the profits of them, and downright discourtesy in not communicating even the public part to Germany.

<sup>1</sup> See chapter on "Franco-Russian Alliance" and Appendix C.

<sup>2</sup> See the quotations in Chapter I.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PREPAREDNESS OF THE ALLIES

ON the first page of one of the illustrated English weeklies<sup>1</sup> you will see in a number issued immediately after the declaration of war by England upon Germany a picture of Sir Edward Grey addressing the House. The words put in his mouth are "We are prepared." England was indeed prepared, and in my opinion did right in keeping prepared where she was certain to be involved whether she would or would not desire conflict. Nobody thought of claiming that she was not prepared until of a sudden some shrewd person at the head of the war propaganda saw how advantageous it would be to place the Germans in the position of shocking the reposing world. Let us not lose our tempers about this deception, which, after all, is a part of war. Let us, on the other hand, resolve not to reject information which may show us the contrary of the fables of war propaganda. Let us cease to be so stupid as to be vexed with people who offer to expose some of the errors or deceptions into which we fell.

As for France, there, we were sure, was a peaceful nation. There we thought we saw with our very eyes the proofs that she was wholly unprepared. Yet so thoroughly prepared was France that at the outset she made a boast of it. Indeed, no Frenchman at the beginning would have thought of maintaining the contrary. It was, as we have seen in an earlier chapter, Poincaré's boast that vigilant France was ready for the fray. It was not until the French also saw the advantage of appearing to have been surprised that they permitted the same fruitful imposition to be practised upon a large part of their own population and upon practi-

<sup>1</sup> The *Graphic*, I think, or possibly the *Illustrated London News*.

cally every man, woman and child in the United States. We believed it as gospel.

How absurd is such a pretence in the light of what we know to-day. For example, Paléologue, who was transferred from Sofia to Petrograd in the early part of 1914, relates in his recent reminiscences that Viviani even then warned him that war would soon break out, though this same Viviani in his open speech to the French Parliament after the German declaration of war complained that nothing was more atrociously sudden.<sup>1</sup> I have already quoted Isvolsky's message from Paris in February 1912, where he states that, though the French have happily settled the Morocco question with Germany, "the War Department continue to prepare actively for military operations in the near future."<sup>2</sup>

It is not strange, then, to read the following admissions by a member of the French General Staff.<sup>3</sup> People generally believe, he says, that at the beginning of the attack of 1914, Germany, in assailing us, was the stronger. People credit her with a considerable superiority of resources and that her first armies comprised a very strong proportion of divisions exclusively made up of reservists. This is lending credence to two ideas which the facts contradict. After showing that the mobile forces of France were an active army of 910,000 men with reserves of 1,325,000, he continues: "One can say, then, that without taking any account of the Belgian Army or the four British divisions, France alone was at the beginning at least equal if not superior to her formidable adversary in the number of the principal units."<sup>4</sup>

Even in 1912, the period of the earlier Balkan strain, France was ready, Isvolsky so hastens to assure Sazonov to that effect, "La mobilization à la frontière de l'est est vérifiée; le matériel est prêt."<sup>5</sup> In July preceding he had advised his Home Office that "the regular conferences

<sup>1</sup> Paléologue in *Revue des deux Mondes*, January 1921. Viviani's speech can be seen in the beginning of the French Yellow Book.

<sup>2</sup> *Livre Noir*, Tome i, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Armée Allemande pendant la Guerre de 1914-1918, par Gen. Buat*, p. 1, 1920.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> December 18, 1912, *Livre Noir*, p. 370

between the Chiefs of Staff are now supplemented by naval conferences, signed by Delcassé, and as soon as Poincaré arrives at St. Petersburg, Sazonoff will sign."<sup>1</sup>

Here we have both these countries boasting that they are prepared, and yet our hundred million people across the ocean believing that both of them were taken in a ghastly surprise. It is well, therefore, to get some comprehension of the extent of the military preparations of the Allies before the war, because if it turns out that all three of the countries which subsequently became engaged in war with Germany were fully armed, we certainly must conclude that Germany was not without some knowledge of it, and at the last moment she could not take her steps with deliberation, but might have to act precipitately. Certainly, if her enemies were as well prepared as I think this chapter will show, Germany, from the moment of the Russian mobilization, had not an hour to lose. Half a day might mean the loss of Königsberg, another day the loss of Danzig. With how little reflection do people talk who suggest that Germany, even after the Russian mobilization, might have moved her troops to the frontier and there have waited! Absurd! This is the very thing the Russians would have desired, for during the waiting on the border she would be bringing up her incalculable reserves from the interior to strike her blow when their might was all collected. It was Russia that could afford to wait. It was Russia that should have been told by France to wait. Russia alone was from her immensity the one country that was not exposed to invasion. Germany could not wait. No, not a day after the Russian mobilization began.

One fundamental military principle must be constantly kept in mind in judging Germany, that she was wholly outnumbered from the start, that she must depend upon superior quickness, and that upon no account must she delay until both her adversaries had their full forces on the frontiers. Nor must the reader forget what was in the very treaty of 1892, between France and Russia,<sup>2</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> *Livre Noir*, p. 296. The French war department, he says again, was very sanguine of the results of a conflict. *Ibid.*, p. 326.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix C and the chapter on the "Franco-Russian Alliance."



in the event of war with Germany, France and Russia must so move that Germany would have to fight them both at the same time on two fronts.

We have already seen that Lord Haldane, when Minister of War, began his preparations nine years before the conflict, and that his instructions were even to get into correspondence with the Ministers of the Colonies. This was in 1905. Lord French tells us that his preparation with France was on a complete and mutual understanding<sup>1</sup> that the army England had been preparing, besides her putting the navy in unexampled condition, was to be 160,000 men, which were to be delivered at a point near Belgium on twelve days' notice. As to Lord French, there was no surprise, for he tells us that for years past he regarded a general war in Europe as an eventual certainty, and when the military attachés of France had any tremors lest England should desert them, he was evidently able to calm them because, as he says, "I felt perfectly sure that so long as Mr. Asquith remained Prime Minister, and Lord Haldane, Sir Edward Grey, and Mr. Winston Churchill continued to be members of the Cabinet, their offices would guide the destinies of the British Empire, and that we would remain true to our friendly understanding with the Entente."<sup>2</sup>

Lord French went about his business at once in 1905, and apparently never ceased to give attention to the details of the ultimate conflict. He tells us that in 1911, the German Emperor having invited him to see the extensive manœuvres in Germany, he attended them. The Germany Emperor, he says, "trusting to my honour not to reveal anything if I visited France."<sup>3</sup> These things are told to-day with perfect frankness by exalted English officials, who gave vigorous and honourable service in the war that France dragged their country into, and who are assuredly impartial. They are candidly helping history without bitterness.

<sup>1</sup> "1914," p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3. One cannot help noting the inevitable effect upon the French people, or at any rate upon the French Government, of assurances that they had behind them the power of England. We must not lose sight of this in judging the aggressiveness of France in 1913-14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Of Russia we have thus far taken no account, since England with her navy brought to the unparalleled height which Haldane and Corbett describe could certainly enforce the fatal blockade against Germany.<sup>1</sup> With even ordinary Russian efficiency, indeed, even without it, it would seem as if France were abundantly protected. The truth is, France was too well protected. With each passing year her officials exulted more and more in the growing and enduring strength of the entente, in the increasing might of the English Navy, in the size, the excellence of the French Army. The correspondence of the Belgian Ambassadors, quoted in the first chapter, throws a terrible light on the assuredness of French officials, who now began to pass from a sense of security to an attitude of insolence. With each passing year was not the Russian Army growing greater? Was not the combined force of the three nations such as Germany could not possibly withstand? France that formerly observed a proper caution, France that once believed it wise to be discreet in international utterances, felt she could at last spread the wings of the Gallic cock.<sup>2</sup>

I am not deciding at this time whether the English preparations or even their collaboration with France was wise or unwise, for as will be seen in the chapter on England's Responsibility the English situation was curiously complicated. I do say that on a people like the French it could have but one effect.

Returning now to the subject of Russian preparation, we know that their arms were badly shattered and their political system almost disorganized in 1905, when the country may be said to have been in a practical revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Haldane leaves no doubt in our minds that the English preparations were in every sense complete before the war. See his book, pp. 44, 177, 181, 185. Of the navy he uses the words "brought to an unparalleled height." The army of England, it is true, was not to be a large one, one of only 160,000 men, but that army was, Haldane says, a completely re-organized one, and it was intended to be, as it proved to be, a tremendous aid to France in the first German assaults through Belgium, in fact, a much more potent factor than France has generally acknowledged. But if England had brought only her navy to perfection, what greater contribution could be made to successful war against a country which had to fight on two fronts nations whose armies were so well organized as those of France and Russia, and which besides were overwhelming in number?

<sup>2</sup> See the quotations from Isvolsky, *ante*, on the French confidence.

This was, from the German point of view, the fatal year in which the Kaiser spared France, at his mercy, but France, spared by Germany, resolved not to trust the Power that spared her. She poured into Russia fresh money and saw to it that those vast sums restored the Russian military force. She did more. She saw to it that not only armies were prepared, but that railways were built by Russia to the German frontier. For what purpose could strategic military railways be built to the German frontier except for assault? Such means of transportation, built by a nation overwhelmingly larger than the one it approached and threatened were a menace. Not only should the Germans not have submitted to it so long, but they should have imposed upon Russia the necessity of stopping it. Every country has the right of self-preservation. No country should submit to a visible armed preparation for attack against itself.

The hostility of Russia to Germany had been acute even years before. "Several months before the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East, we were busy preparing for what appeared an inevitable war with Germany and Austro-Hungary. *We went so far as appointing army commanders.*"<sup>1</sup> And yet there are people who wonder why the Germans were alarmed at the course of sentiment in Russia. This situation that Witte describes was, moreover, before the reorganization of the Russian Army with the fresh funds of France, and in 1913 the Russian Army was a formidable military machine, backed by enormous reserves. Every year it was growing stronger.

"A large part of the loan of five hundred million dollars obtained from France," says Frobenius, "had to be used for purposes of completing with the greatest possible haste the network of railroad lines from the interior of the Empire to the German and Austro-Hungarian frontiers."<sup>2</sup> Frobenius points also to the great

<sup>1</sup> Witte, *Memoirs*, p. 123. This of 1904!

<sup>2</sup> Frobenius, *Germany's Hour of Destiny*, p. 43. Gerard mentions these railways too: "Another reason for an immediate war was the loan made by France to Russia on condition that additional strategic railways were to be constructed by the Russians to Poland." *My Four Years in Germany*, p. 99.

increase of Russian fortresses, citing the statistics of the Minister of War for June 1912. There was the fortified Kovno-Niemen line. There was a fortified line opposite Galicia, an advance seat of war, the centre of which was in the triangular fortifications of Warsaw, Novo-Georgevich and Zegrze. There was an impregnable line of new forts at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland.<sup>1</sup>

I have condensed in Appendix C the account by the German officers, Von Eggeling and Von Kuhl, of the Russian military and railway preparations for offensive operations against Germany.

That the Russian armies were in a high state of preparation, that they had been gradually assembled close to the German frontier, and that the speed with which they could throw an enormous force into East Prussia had been underestimated by the Germans, is now apparent. It is but the other day that Lieutenant-General Macdonough, who during the war was an English Director of Military Intelligence, said that Germany grossly overestimated the time Russia would require to mobilize her armies. "The Germans calculated that Russia could not advance any force before the middle of September 1914, and consequently that there would be six weeks available to defeat the enemy on the Western Front before it became necessary to turn to the East."<sup>2</sup> And we have already quoted the figures of Hindenburg that within the months of August and September Russia brought no fewer than eight hundred thousand men and seventeen hundred guns into East Prussia, for the defence of which, he states, the Germans had only two hundred thousand men and six hundred guns.<sup>3</sup>

Well might Sukhomlinoff boast in 1914 that Russia was now fully prepared.<sup>4</sup> Prepared for what? Not for defence. Prepared for attack. Nobody ever intended to invade and attack the vast receding plains of Russia. It is a maxim of European militarism that nothing can be gained by such an invasion ever since the disastrous attempt of 1812 by the greatest military genius of modern times.

<sup>1</sup> Frobenius, pp. 43-46.

<sup>2</sup> *New York World*, London Despatch, November 25, 1921.

*Out of My Life*, vol. i, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> Bogitsevich, *Cause of the War*, p. 9.



I repeat that every circumstance shows a resolute intention of the Russians to attack, as soon as their army was in their opinion at its height, the country next to them to the west, inferior in population, and to break that power which alone stood between them and the dominion of the greater part of Europe. The document known as the *Durnovo Memorandum* is one of the most calmly villainous papers in existence, a tranquil reasoning of the adviser of the Tsar as to how soon and when it will pay to assault Germany.<sup>1</sup> There is not one line in the whole dissertation that discusses the morality and humanity of such an enterprise.

Just why people think Germany could afford to wait a few days after the Russians began their mobilization is not clear to me. It is clear to me that France should have insisted upon Russia's pausing in the last days of July, when the Berlin Government notoriously took in hand itself the matter of stopping the strife by personal appeals to the Tsar. For my part, I have never been able to find one communication from the Quai d'Orsay to Petrograd imploring them or even requesting them to wait. The Germans, in my opinion, were thoroughly frightened. The remark to that effect by the Russian Ambassador at Berlin to his Home Office was correct. The Germans were trying to appear not afraid.<sup>2</sup>

Even the military correspondent of the *London Times*, by no means friendly to Germany, remarks :

There are signs that Russia has done with defensive strategy. The increased number of guns in the Russian Army, the growing efficiency of the army, and the improvements made in the strategic railways, are matters which cannot be left out of account. These things are well calculated to make Germany anxious.<sup>3</sup>

The same correspondent reports large extraordinary military and naval credits in a secret session of the Duma. The Russian Army has now attained an effective strength unprecedented,<sup>4</sup> and as Professor Fife tells us, during the preceding year Russian journals and publicists took on an

<sup>1</sup> This document can be found in the *Living Age* for May and June 1921.

<sup>2</sup> Despatch of March 12, 1914, *Ent. Dip.*, p. 711.

<sup>3</sup> June 1914, *Dip. Rev.*, p. 276.

<sup>4</sup> *Dip. Rev.*, p. 276.

increasingly bitter tone towards Germany. The organization of the Russian Army after the Japanese War seemed complete, while "it was well known that the Tsar's Government was busy with the construction of strategic railways in the Western borderland."<sup>1</sup>

Exactly what composure our own countrymen would show under these circumstances we may imagine. I say again that if there were in Mexico a population of one hundred and fifty millions, possessing even a respectably organized, drilled and equipped army of three million men, not to speak of reserves, St. Louis, as far from the scene of invasion as Paris from Berlin, would have been in a state of panic, and would have been wondering what the Government at Washington was doing in that it permitted the continuation of so bold a menace. The force that menaced Germany was most of it no further distant than Albany is from New York.

And all this time Russia was collaborating in a very considerable degree, just as France was, with England. Even so late as May 1914 Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, informed the Tsar that Grey had empowered the Admiralty Staff to negotiate with France and Russia for technical conditions of possible action by France, England and Russia, through their navies. But if Germany turned to the South and expected any assistance from Austria, she could find little comfort. Austria, aside from the assault which she must expect from Russia, would, indeed, have her hands full with Serbia.

On the 19th of February, 1914, Paschitch, the Serbian President, was received by the Tsar, whom he felicitated upon the fact that Russia had armed herself so thoroughly. The emissary of regicide Serbia asked the Tsar for one hundred and twenty thousand rifles, and munitions and howitzers, and when the Tsar asked him how many soldiers Serbia could provide, and was told that it would be about half a million, Nicholas was pleased.<sup>2</sup>

Russia, in short, had reached such organization and amplitude of force as would have made her alone a formidable

<sup>1</sup> *German Empire between Two Wars*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Dip. Rev.*, p. 275. This and the preceding despatch were not revealed until 1919.

antagonist in 1914, and in 1916 an antagonist which Germany might have been unable to withstand at all. Had the war been delayed two years longer, different, indeed, would have been the result. To defer it until about 1916 was undoubtedly the original policy of the Russian Court, which was, however, finally carried away by what Baron Rosen mildly calls the irresponsible recklessness of those vast knaves Sazonoff, Sukhomlinoff, and Yanouchkevitch.<sup>1</sup> The truth was that the affair at Serajevo precipitated the murder of Germany, which they had intended to perpetrate later. The strategic railways and the heavy artillery would by 1916 have been complete. Nothing, it is clear from all sources of information on this subject, is plainer than that Sukhomlinoff was infatuated with what he deemed the perfection of the Russian forces. Those forces had now grown far beyond what he had ever dreamed to see, and he therefore believed them to be invincible. Invincible they were, except against a nation fighting for its existence.

Let us now turn to the actual statistics, which can be perhaps readily assembled. The following figures have been frequently published, though, I am sorry to say, not much advertised, and have never thus far been disputed. In the decade from 1905 to 1914, the various powers made military expenditure as follows :

|         |    |    |    |    |              |
|---------|----|----|----|----|--------------|
| Russia  | .. | .. | .. | .. | £495,144,622 |
| France  | .. | .. | .. | .. | 347,348,259  |
| Germany | .. | .. | .. | .. | 448,025,543  |
| Austria | .. | .. | .. | .. | 234,668,407  |

In other words, France and Russia in combination had, during the past ten years, spent £159,798,931 (about \$798,946,550.00) more than Austria and Germany in preparing for war.

In 1914 alone the expenditures were the following :

|         |    |    |              |
|---------|----|----|--------------|
| Russia  | .. | .. | £105,955,980 |
| France  | .. | .. | 81,065,967   |
| England | .. | .. | 80,430,000   |

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Total .. £267,451,947 (or about \$1,337,259,735)

<sup>1</sup> First-named Foreign Minister, second Minister for War, and the last-named Chief of Staff.

## LET FRANCE EXPLAIN

|            |    |                                      |
|------------|----|--------------------------------------|
| Germany    | .. | £59,034,770                          |
| Austria .. | .. | 24,992,000                           |
| <hr/>      |    |                                      |
| Total      | .. | £84,026,770 (or about \$420,133,850) |

When the armies were about to take the field the following were the numbers of men and guns which they could muster for immediate action :

| Men.     |    |    |           | Guns.   |    |    |        |
|----------|----|----|-----------|---------|----|----|--------|
| Russia   | .. | .. | 1,284,000 | Russia  | .. | .. | 4,432  |
| France   | .. | .. | 818,532   | France  | .. | .. | 2,936  |
| England  | .. | .. | 255,438   | England | .. | .. | 1,170  |
| Italy .. | .. | .. | 305,033   | Italy   | .. | .. | 1,470  |
| <hr/>    |    |    |           | <hr/>   |    |    |        |
| Total    | .. | .. | 2,663,003 | Total   | .. | .. | 10,008 |
|          |    |    |           |         |    |    |        |
| Germany  | .. | .. | 806,016   | Germany | .. | .. | 3,866  |
| Austria  | .. | .. | 370,725   | Austria | .. | .. | 1,854  |
| <hr/>    |    |    |           | <hr/>   |    |    |        |
| Total    | .. | .. | 1,176,741 | Total   | .. | .. | 5,720  |

General Buat's figures<sup>1</sup> gave the German active army at 870,000 men, the French active army at 910,000 men, their immediate reserves respectively at 1,180,000 and 1,325,000. It was only in the ultimate reserves that Germany would, as against France, have a superiority, but that superiority she would more than need on the other front against Russia. Thus the fight began with great armies equal as between Germany and France, Russia totally overtopping any possible immediate force of Germany. In 1914 Russia, which in 1913 had spent about two hundred and fifty millions of dollars, spent three hundred and seventy millions.<sup>2</sup>

I will not here burden the reader with the enormous increases in the navies of these Powers, but it is enough to say that Russia had increased her naval budget in the following proportions :

|         |    |    |    |             |
|---------|----|----|----|-------------|
| 1911-12 | .. | .. | .. | £11,500,000 |
| 1912-13 | .. | .. | .. | £18,000,000 |
| 1913-14 | .. | .. | .. | £25,000,000 |

<sup>1</sup> *L'Armée Allemande*, etc., pp. 7 and 9.

<sup>2</sup> *The Statesman's Year Book* for 1913 and 1914. The figures given there are in sterling.



From these figures can we imagine that the nerves of the Germans were perfectly calm? Can we blame them if they thought a ring of enemies was encircling them? Is it fantastical to suppose that these three adversary nations would act in common when one of them would discharge the first weapon, and who was more likely to discharge the weapon than a Sukhomlinoff after a night of debauch or after those heavy losses at play which he could recoup in the profits of war contracts?<sup>1</sup>

It is not to be overlooked that Belgium, too, was preparing a considerable army, and nobody could expect Belgium to be friendly to Germany. Belgium, however, neutral in determination, was French at heart, and her war strength was raised to three hundred and forty thousand men.<sup>2</sup>

The following table gives an analysis of the military units of the various Powers:

|                 |    |    | Infantry and<br>Rifle<br>Battalions. | Field and<br>Horse<br>Batteries. | Heavy<br>Batteries. | Guns of Horse<br>or Field. |
|-----------------|----|----|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Germany         | .. | .. | 669                                  | 633                              | 210                 | 4,998                      |
| Austria-Hungary | .. | .. | 684                                  | 413                              | 28                  | 2,370                      |
|                 |    |    | <hr/>                                | <hr/>                            | <hr/>               | <hr/>                      |
| Central Powers  | .. | .. | 1,353                                | 1,046                            | 238                 | 7,368                      |
|                 |    |    | <hr/>                                | <hr/>                            | <hr/>               | <hr/>                      |
| Russia          | .. | .. | 1,344                                | 622                              | 24                  | 6,516                      |
| France          | .. | .. | 673                                  | 705                              | 58                  | 4,108                      |
|                 |    |    | <hr/>                                | <hr/>                            | <hr/>               | <hr/>                      |
|                 |    |    | 2,017                                | 1,327                            | 82                  | 10,624                     |

With these astounding proofs that the Allies were making, and all three of them, enormously greater preparations than the Germans, we may now recall what the most competent English critics themselves have said as to the preparedness of the Germans. The reader has already seen Barker's summary of 1912.<sup>3</sup> He there tells us that the German war material is scarcely up to date, that the military outfit of France is superior, and that

<sup>1</sup> As will subsequently be seen, Sukhomlinoff was a man of infamous character. When he was tried after the Revolution, he confessed that he had lied to the Tsar and ordered a general mobilization without the Tsar's orders, and then continued with it after he had promised the Tsar to recall it. "Yes," he said, "I lied to the Tsar." Oman's account of his trial, *Outbreak of the War*.

<sup>2</sup> Neilson, *How Diplomats Make War*, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> *Ante* Chapter III, *Nineteenth Century*, for June 1912.

the German artillery is inferior to the French. Their tactics, too, he says, have become antiquated. We have seen, too, what Repington, a most astute military critic, had to say in October 1911, after witnessing the German manœuvres. This critic who, it will be remembered, was in the secret of the military collaboration between the French and English General Staffs, may be quoted now more at length :

The writer has not formed a wholly favourable opinion of the German Army, which appears to him to be living on a glorious past and to be unequal to the repute in which it is commonly held. There was nothing in the higher leading at the manœuvres of a distinguished character, and mistakes were committed which tended to shake the confidence of foreign spectators in the reputation of the command. The infantry lacked dash, displayed no knowledge of the use of ground, entrenched themselves badly, were extremely slow in their movements, offered vulnerable targets at medium range, ignored the service of security, performed the approach marches in an old-time manner, were not trained to understand the connection between fire and movement, and seemed totally unaware of the effect of modern fire. The cavalry was in many ways exceedingly old-fashioned. The artillery, with its out-of-date material and slow and ineffective methods of fire, appeared so inferior that it can have no pretension to measure itself against the French in anything approaching level terms, and finally, the dirigibles and aeroplanes presented the fourth arm in a relatively unfavourable light. A nation which after all gives up little more than half its able-bodied sons to the army has become less militarist than formerly.<sup>1</sup>

Again and again will an American who has the patience to read these pages marvel at the success with which a contrary idea of the German preparedness was either spread among us or gradually invented by our own resentments. Believing, as we devoutly have believed, that the Germans were always first in military reform, enterprise and equipment, with what astonishment do we read the report by the Russian Ambassador at Berlin in 1909, that *by next year* the infantry armament of Germany will probably catch up with that of Russia and France !<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> London Times, October 28, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> *Les Documents Secrets*, p. 36, Laloy, Paris, 1920.

## CHAPTER XI

### SERBIA AND THE BALKANS

IT has been said, and with substantial truth, that during several generations every King of Serbia was either assassinated or died in exile.<sup>1</sup> This is the tender Serbia for whom France thought it better to drench Europe in blood than that she become the vassal state of Austria instead of the vassal state of Russia.

Who first taught us that Russia had a peculiar right to protect Serbia? Why did it come into our heads that the tie between Russia and Serbia was sympathetic and profound? Between Russia and Serbia there intervened two ranges of mountains, a kingdom or two, and a mighty river. Political right of interference, consequently, Russia had none. Whatever rights she had must have sprung from a humanity which does not appear in her counsels and is not exhibited by her history.

Serbia, to begin with, is not wholly a Slav state. Most surprising of all to Americans is that Russia herself is not a Slav state. "Russia," says a former Russian Ambassador, "is no more a Slav state than Great Britain is a Teuton power because of race affinity."<sup>2</sup> In considering the Russian nation, we must remember that a large part of the population is not Slav at all, that Russia has absorbed in her history populations of different descent. "The Poles," said Professor Namier,<sup>3</sup> "had neither Slav feelings nor Slav traditions, nor did the other Slav nations feel much brotherly love for them." The most curious thing of all is that when we deduct from the great population of Russia all the non-Slav

<sup>1</sup> *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Rosen, *Saturday Evening Post*, August 21, 1920.

<sup>3</sup> *Germany and Eastern Europe*, p. 46.

elements, Austro-Hungary, with her eighteen million Slavs, becomes an equally substantial Slav power.

Between Russian and Serbia there never existed any affection whatsoever. When one could use the other to advantage it did so. At all other times each intrigued for or against the other. "However great Russian influence may be, she is intensely hated by Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek and Turk alike."<sup>1</sup> The feeling of rage most frequently disturbed their consultations. Repeatedly the Serbians have felt themselves used by Russia and cast off.<sup>2</sup> The well-known journalist Stillman speaks of the Russian agents who "systematically provoked hostility to Turkey, which was natural and consistent with the good of the people, but also against Austria, which was unjust and aggravated the troubles more."<sup>3</sup>

The intrigues of Russia in the Balkans are so innumerable, they were so incessant, that to ascribe any other motive to them than that of world policy is ridiculous. To detail them would be a waste of time.<sup>4</sup>

The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia of July 23, 1914, was such as could only have come from those who had made up their mind to cut once for all the web which Russian diplomacy had spun about the dual monarchy and who knew that the help of the German ally could be reckoned upon. Whatever the issue of the conflict should be it should relieve Austria from the nightmare of Slavonic pressure.<sup>5</sup>

The situation is fairly expressed by Fox as follows :

The European Congress of Berlin which revised the Treaty of San Stefano, recognized that the motive of Russia was to create in Bulgaria a vast but weak state which would obediently serve her interests and in time fall into her hands.<sup>6</sup>

The policy of creating a greater Serbia by Russia was the same. "At Belgrade," says Professor Sloane, "the trade of politics has been on a level unknown elsewhere, unless it be at Constantinople. The overthrow of one

<sup>1</sup> Reginald Wyon, *The Balkans from Within*.

<sup>2</sup> "The Serbian who feels almost as acutely as the Roumanian that he was made the catpaw of Russia." *Serbia*, by Herbert Vivian, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography of a Journalist*, vol. ii, p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> See Bogitsevich, *Causes of the War*, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> Fife, *German Empire between Two Wars*, pp. 40-44.

<sup>6</sup> *The Balkan Peninsula*, p. 44.



king and the setting up of another was a matter of money, and it was the Russian Ambassador who provided the funds. The whole conspiracy has been traced to its source ; there is not a step for which the documentary evidence cannot be produced.”<sup>1</sup>

Nitti is equally clear. “Russia alone promoted and kept alive the agitations in Serbia and of the Slavs in Austria. It was on account of Russia that the Serbian Government was a perpetual cause of disturbance, a perpetual threat to Austria-Hungary. The Russian policy in Serbia was really criminal.”<sup>2</sup>

The whole purpose of the Serbian policy seemed to be strife, and against Austria she had every excuse for strife. That country had legislated against her in tariffs and had, as is well known, a vast body of Slavs with whom Serbia was in secret alliance. “Twice, in 1912 and 1913, had the dual monarchy mobilized against Russia and Serbia,” says Professor Fife.<sup>3</sup> “The Vienna ministry was itself condemned to stand always on guard against Serbian aggression. There seemed no choice save between the continuance of a maddening condition of irritation with bankrupting military crises and a sharp and decisive war.”

Nobody pretends in these things, who is informed at all on the subject, that Russia was not constantly fomenting these discontents, the fruits of which, if they ended in the disruption of the Austrian Empire, were to Russian ambition of incalculable value.<sup>4</sup> With each year as we approach 1914 we see the increasing intimacy between St. Petersburg and Belgrade. In 1908 the Tsar assured Paschitch, the Serbian Minister, that the Bosnia-Herzegovinian question would be decided by war alone, for which meantime they could preserve a calm attitude with military preparation.<sup>5</sup> At a later time, as we shall see, the Tsar was delighted to

<sup>1</sup> Sloane's *The Balkans*, p. 143 (May 1914).

<sup>2</sup> *Peaceless Europe*, pp. 12, 83-4, 87.

<sup>3</sup> *Germany between Two Wars*, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> The murder of Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia has almost always been laid to Russian intrigue. Alexander was of the Obrenovitch dynasty and friendly to Austria, whereas the succeeding or Karageorgevitch dynasty was and remains undeviatingly Russian in its sympathies. Bogitsevich, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Bogitsevich, quoted in *Dip. Rev.*, p. 101.

know that Serbia could furnish half a million men. Just why anybody should suppose that it would be useful to Europe to have the armies of Serbia and Russia unite in destroying Austria-Hungary, and that it would be a benefit to mankind to have Russia rescue such a state as Serbia by a general European war, is past understanding.

What European diplomats really thought of Serbia may be summed up in Grey's remark in the first document of the English White Book. "That any of the Great Powers should be dragged into a war with Serbia," he says, "would be detestable."

The whole history of Serbia is one of crime and violence. During the very Peace Conference at Versailles, after the world had been wrecked to save this worthless little province from being a vassal state of some nation or other, the Serbs fell to slaughtering the Albanians.<sup>1</sup> So bad was their record that for a long time, as we all know, the European Powers would not countenance the last and prevailing dynasty, that of Karageorgevitch, which had established itself by a peculiarly wanton murder of the head of the preceding dynasty and his Queen. A people so given over to cruelty can hardly be conceived. Miss Durham, the best informed of Balkan travellers, tells us that on the murder of Alexander and Draga, portions of Draga's skin were cut off by an officer, who dried and preserved it as a trophy. She tells us that one of the officers later showed a friend of hers a bit which he kept in his pocket book.<sup>2</sup> Their habit of cutting off the heads of the killed or captured is well known.<sup>3</sup> Miss Durham further tells us that a Serbian officer nearly choked with laughter when, over his beer, he told her how his men had bayoneted the women and children of a certain town.<sup>4</sup>

An English writer of note in a book published during

<sup>1</sup> See the annoyance which this caused the Peace Conference. *What Really Happened at Paris*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> I have read somewhere of the answer which a Serb made to one who remonstrated against this Balkan practice of placing the ghastly heads on the tops of poles. The gentle Serbian confessed that he, too, did not like it. However, he could stand the thing so long as the children refrained from putting cigarettes in the mouths. This he thought indelicate.

<sup>4</sup> *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, p. 235.

the war, when everything favourable was said of Serbia by the Allies, is surely frank enough. "With a fierce and excitable temper the Serb is not easily satisfied. The continual unrest has given advantages to intriguers and opportunists of a low type." Education extends to only one-fifth of the population. Their whole talk is of fighting which was the occupation of their fathers before them. The murder of the King and Queen Draga was by officers of the army who committed "terrible indignities on the dead."<sup>1</sup>

The Austrian Archduke, whose murder at Serajevo brought on the European catastrophe, had, it is said, a plan of uniting all his Slavs together with some of the neighbouring Slav states in one kingdom, which should be united with Hungary and Austria under a form of union similar to that binding the two latter. While this may not have been an easy thing to accomplish, it was an honest thing to aim at, but of course it would have ended Russian influence in the Balkans for ever. There was not one Balkan State which, whatever service it might get from Russia, desired to be placed under her sway.<sup>2</sup>

However, the Archduke's plan was good cause in Balkan politics for his murder. None of the Balkan States, though resentful of Russian rule, desired permanent union with each other, since each preferred the policy of building up his own state by robbing his neighbour. The agents both of Russia and of the Balkan States would accordingly regard as their enemy the future Emperor of Austria in any such scheme, however honourable and wise.

At the outbreak of the war none of us knew anything about Serbia. We devoured greedily stories of her innocence

<sup>1</sup> *History of Serbia*, Temperley (London, 1917), p. 280. Draga, he tells us, was of very low origin, which was distasteful to the Serbs. They fretted under this. Nevertheless, "Russia made use of the opportunity (afforded by Draga's marriage to the King) to renew her friendship with Serbia and Czar Nicholas sent a representative to act as best man and was the first to congratulate the Queen," *ibid.*, p. 278. Draga was a notorious character in the Balkans.

<sup>2</sup> "When the Balkan States form a compact body opposing firm resistance to every attempt against their union, all controversies will cease and the East will no longer be a menace to the peace of Europe." Signor Tittoni, December 3, 1908, quoted by Rosen in *Origins of the War*, p. 115. See Sloane's *The Balkans*, p. 255.

and of the sad things that must happen to her if she were punished by Austria, for what we did not know was a long series of dangerous and criminal offences. The relation of Serbia towards Austria was like that of Mexico to us at its worst, multiplied tenfold. Let us imagine that in the United States there were several millions of Mexicans, and that a constant intrigue went on between Mexico and this body of our citizens. To make the illustration simpler, suppose that Mexico was a negro republic, and that it was in constant agitation of the negroes in the United States against our government. Is not this a question which we would insist upon settling ourselves, and if some great Power like Russia resolved upon supporting Mexico in any such course of conduct or upon taking out of our hands the right of private settlement of our disputes with Mexico, would we not regard that other Power as aiming at our destruction ?

Always must it be borne in mind that the question between Austria and Serbia was one vital to Austria-Hungary. Nothing in it was vital to Russia, nothing even remotely vital to France. At the very outset France should have warned Russia that she would not join her in a war growing out of the Balkans. On that warning we should, indeed, have escaped war.

The world has little conception of the extent to which Austria was tormented and endangered by this bitter little Kingdom of Serbia. In the enclosure and appendix to Document No. 19 of the Austro-Hungary Red Book will be found considerable detail of a system of attacks and murderous propaganda such as probably never occurred before in modern times between adjacent kingdoms. No country could possibly have tolerated it as Austria did so long unless she was in dread of the superior Power allied with her would-be assassin. Societies openly existed and met across the river from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, plotting and debating the means of disturbing the larger country.

The Austrian Government was compelled to examine constantly the mails which were flooded with publications from Serbia, the least of which, if sent by Mexico into our



southern states to agitate our negro population, would put millions of our white people in a ferment.

Among the expressions of the Serbian Press after the murder of the Archduke and his wife, we find not one word of sympathy or horror. On the contrary, more than twenty-five detestable comments were made by journals which are not even at pains to feign regret.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Austria had been before this time on the verge of war with Serbia. That she kept out of the war we have seen was due in part to the efforts of the Berlin Cabinet in 1913, aided by the English. The peace effort was, in appearance at least, aided also by the French, for whom, however, it is unfortunate to have to quote a letter of April 9, 1913, from the Serbian Minister at Paris to the Prime Minister, Paschitsch, at Belgrade.

A competent person with whom I have confidentially discussed the matter during the last days informs me that about the middle of last week we stood upon the brink of a general European war, and that the reason, amongst others, why this war had been at present avoided, with certain moral sacrifice, was also to be traced to the wish to give the Balkan Allies an opportunity for recovery, rallying and preparation for any emergencies which might happen in the not distant future.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Durham, in the work already cited, refers to the impatience of a Russian agent at the tendency of the Serbs to precipitate the war before plans were complete. He was very much vexed that the Serbs could not wait until 1914, when Russia would be ready. The fact that England had joined the Franco-Russian Alliance gave them great glee in Serbia.<sup>2</sup> "Now you can fight Germany," said one of them to the crowd, which replied, "Of course, for what else is this Entente?"

It may be recalled that Sazonoff, in September 1912, while Russian Foreign Minister, paid a visit to England, where he passed, it is said, a whole week at Balmoral, conferring with Sir Edward Grey and Bonar Law. "He left this country," says an English writer, "on the 28th of the

<sup>1</sup> This is one of the documents revealed after the war. *German White Book*, 1919, Part II, 51.

<sup>2</sup> *Twenty Years*, etc., p. 178.

month and on the 30th the Balkan States mobilized. The inference was unavoidable."<sup>1</sup>

The activities of Russia in the Balkans were, as I have said, incessant. The war of 1913 having been postponed, preparations by the Allies continued. I have already mentioned, and it is well to refer to it again, that before the murder at Serajevo, the Serbian Prime Minister visiting Petrograd had an audience with the Tsar. This occurred on the 2nd of February, 1914, and the following from his report is significant :

I begged of him that Russia might assist us by the supply of 120,000 rifles and munitions and some guns which might be dispensable from their magazines. . . . The Czar asked me whether I had spoken about the matter with one of the Russian Ministers. I answered I had spoken with the Minister of War, Sukhomlinoff, and with Sazonoff, and that the Minister of War had said it could be done if the political position allowed of it. At this opportunity, I told the Czar how welcome it was to us that Russia had equipped herself so well. It infuses us with calmness in the hope of a better future. The Czar said that they had done and were still doing as much as they could. . . . He then asked me how many soldiers Serbia could now muster. He said Serbia had astonished the world by raising 400,000 men. I answered, we think we can raise half a million well-clothed and well-armed soldiers. He replied, that is satisfactory ; it is no small matter and one can accomplish much by means of it.<sup>2</sup>

Here we have a situation probably unexampled, as I have said, in the history of modern nations. A cruel and relentless little people propose, with the backing of an enormous despotic Power, to keep up such incessant propaganda as will work the dissolution of a neighbouring country which, year after year, was compelled to acquiesce in this villainy, to keep always prepared for war, and to swallow in silence a policy that it would ordinarily be allowed to extinguish by war.

<sup>1</sup> Abbott's *Turkey, Greece and the Great Powers*, p. 165. It would be unjustifiable to assume as true anything a Russian statesman might say, as that he got authority and encouragement from English statesmen to work up a war in the Balkans. But the writer's inference is probably true to this extent, that Sazonoff was able to advise his Balkan friends that England without question had committed herself to the Entente, for in November of the same year, 1912, Grey and Cambon exchanged memoranda as to the association of France and England in the event of war. *British White Book*, 105.

<sup>2</sup> *German White Book*, 1919, Part II, 53.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CRISIS

MARTIAL France we have seen in the preceding pages all aglow for war. The perilous geographical situation of Germany we have also seen. Let us approach now the end, the calculated, the desired horror of war; war for revenge and prestige by France, for conquest by Russia.

With new information do we now contemplate the final act in this awful drama. The preceding pages have shown that not only was the German Army, in the opinion of the best English critic, deteriorating, and the German people less militaristic,<sup>1</sup> but that the French Army, to say nothing of the Russian, was, on the recent official statements of a member of its own staff, at the outbreak of the war in its perfection and of equal size with the German.<sup>2</sup> Forty-three years of peace had relaxed the Germans while the others were preparing.<sup>3</sup> Nor were the Germans ignorant of this. The contrary we see in Von Moltke's secret memorandum, in which he confesses the perils of his country and the inferiority of its forces under the gathering clouds of war.<sup>4</sup> But the Germans could see still more. Can we blame them if they believed themselves encircled by a ring of enemies? Can we believe that they were glad to plunge into this war when they knew the following: first, the old Alliance between France and Russia; second, the building of military railways by Russia to the German frontier; third, the enormous improvement of the Russian Army; fourth, a firm and even threatening junction of France and England in 1905 over Morocco against the German

<sup>1</sup> Repington and Barker, Chapter X.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 2 *ante* and Repington *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter II, Appendix A.

<sup>4</sup> See Buat, Chapter X.

contention ; fifth, a peaceful adjustment in 1907 between Russia and England of the Persian controversy ; sixth, the elevation of Poincaré to Premiership in France in 1912 ; seventh, a naval agreement between France and Russia in 1912 ; eighth, the naval agreement between France and England in 1912 ; ninth, the election of Poincaré to the Presidency in 1913 ; tenth, naval negotiations between Russia and England in 1913 and 1914 ; eleventh, a notorious unity of action between Russia, England and France on every diplomatic question that arose ; twelfth, a constant increase in the military and naval budgets of all three during ten whole years.

While I fully agree with Professor Fay that the Germans were to blame, for the general reason that they were too military, at least in their manners, I also agree with the conclusion, and the only conclusion which he could come to, that Germany did not plot or want this particular war.<sup>1</sup> Who then could have averted this war ? Are we willing to believe at last that France and Russia could have saved us from it ? Such is my opinion, formed after long and patient study of this subject.

Suppose, upon the quarrel between Austria and Serbia, the French Government had notified Russia that if the latter went to war on account of Serbia, France would not join her. Do we imagine then that Russia would even have mobilized ? Remember that there was not even the beginning of a warlike movement by Germany against any Power or of Austria against Russia, at the beginning of the Austro-Serbian controversy, or even on the declaration of war against Serbia. Had France taken this position, there could have been no general European War. A little country, described by everybody before the war and by most writers since the war as among the most vexatious and infamous in the world, would have been punished by a superior Power which she had been long tormenting. I do not even suggest yet that the French Government ought to have recognized what they well knew, that Serbia was but the

<sup>1</sup> See the quotation from Professor Fay in Chapter I. His articles are the most exhaustive yet prepared on the *immediate* causes of the war, the events of June and July 1914. His larger work is printing.



tool of Russia <sup>1</sup> for breaking up the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the clearing of her own path to Constantinople and the Adriatic. Leave this fact entirely out and still, since Germany was making not even a threat of war against Russia, why should not France have taken this position?

That the controversy between Russia and Austria was over an affair which did not concern the interests of France as a Power has to be admitted even by the friends of France. Sir Edward Grey himself has said so. In his speech of August 3, 1914, when the crash had at last come, he states so to the English Parliament. The war, he says, did not originate in anything vital to France,<sup>2</sup> and he himself told the French Ambassador this in an interview.<sup>3</sup> If England were to go into the war with France, he made it plain, England could not do so on the ground that she was protecting something vital to France, but must justify herself on the ground that her own interests were affected in case France and Germany came to war. Even in this latter event he was not clear that England could intervene unless Belgium were violated.

Moreover, a large section of the French public, both before the war (a few indeed during the war) and since the war have protested that the Government of France allowed itself to be dragged into a phase of Russian predatory ambition. Russia beyond question made the war general in Europe by taking up the cause of Serbia, and France brought Western Europe into the conflict by backing Russia in that quarrel. It is perfectly plain from every document and the whole course of diplomatic correspondence that Russia went into the war because she was sure the existing French Government would not fail to follow her, which action on the part of France would inevitably bring in England sooner or later to the side of France.

The chain of events is simple and plain. The French could have stopped the whole thing at the outset. If wrongs were done to Serbia, they could be otherwise redressed. The Austrian Government for that matter had avowed

<sup>1</sup> See the chapter "Serbia and the Balkans."

<sup>2</sup> Earl Loreburn's *How the War Came*, pp. 221-3.

<sup>3</sup> *British White Paper*, 87, 116.

that it would not attempt the annexation of that kingdom, but that it would simply endeavour to punish a state which, in malevolence toward a neighbour and in internal crime, was far worse than Mexico is to the United States. France and Russia, however, would not permit Austria to impose that punishment upon an outrageous neighbour which the United States would claim for itself the exclusive privilege of determining as between ourselves and the Republic of Mexico.

Accordingly the present lamentations of a vigorous portion of the French people concerning the actions of the Poincaré Government in 1914 have a solid basis, and should be borne in mind by the reader when he peruses the following chapters.

The question to France originally was not whether she should support a Russia attacked by Germany, but whether she should stand by Russia in a war between the two. What she did was to back Russia into the war with Germany. Long before the fatal Russian mobilization, she had an opportunity to prevent it. After it was begun she still had an opportunity to stop it. No mobilization by Germany ever preceded the hostile attitude and actions of Russia. This last is something which all have to admit.

I am not overlooking the question whether the Berlin Government knew the terms of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. Since Berchtold had his reasons to conceal the vigour of his steps (lest Germany, as it later did, tell him to stop), it is possible that the precise language was not communicated to the Wilhelmstrasse, but still I believe the substance of it was sufficiently known there. My view is, though, that Austria had a right to make the ultimatum as strong as she pleased. If Russia then tried to make a European war out of this, Russia would commit a wilful wrong. When Russia did take this position, and began to mobilize, Germany pressed Austria to yield and Russia to wait, but the latter, glad of the opportunity, would not. Russia forced the war.

The casual reader may wish to refresh his memory, as we now discuss the most momentous week in the annals of diplomacy.

To sum up, after several years of horrifying Balkan wars and ceaseless Serbian and Russian intrigue, and after Austria's

twice mobilizing against her offensive neighbour, a murder occurred at Serajevo, Bosnia, Austrian territory, close to the Serbian line. The heir to the Austrian crown, together with his wife, was assassinated there on the 28th of June, 1914. The Austro-Hungarian Government immediately charged the Serbian Government with complicity, and diplomatic notes were rapidly exchanged. In the first week of July, the German Kaiser went on his usual summer voyage to Norway. In the middle of July, the President of France and Viviani visited the Czar at Petrograd, returning to Paris in the last week of that month. On the 23rd, Austria-Hungary delivered an extremely severe ultimatum to Serbia. The latter did not wholly accept, but for the most part did accept the terms of the ultimatum. The Austrians, however, declared that the excepted part was vital in dealing with a dynasty founded on assassination and with a people industriously cruel, untruthful and quarrelsome. The Kaiser returned from the North on Sunday, the 26th. In the six following days the fate of Europe was decided.

I may now resume my contention that it was the duty of France to warn Russia that she would not follow her in a war about the Balkans.

But how easily were we all deluded in August 1914! If Russia did not have her way, Serbia would become a "vassal state." That never, never should be permitted. Our good Russian brothers were rising with the most lofty motives to save little Serbia from being a vassal state. Not one of us seemed to be wise enough to reflect that if Russia prevailed in the war, Serbia was sure to be a vassal state, the vassal state of Russia. Other much fairer and purer parts of the European population would also have been the vassals of Russia.

In those days we did not know what kind of people the Russians were, or what kind of rulers they had. They were our Russian brothers then. Those who will be at the pains to read this book will learn just what kind of rascals there were in control of the Petrograd Government, what kind of assassins ruled Serbia, and what kind of people those assassins had the privilege to rule. Then we can look back upon the events of four terrible years and decide

whether the French Government of 1914, knowing these things far better than we could ever hope to know them, was justified in following Russia in her Balkan ambitions at the cost of a war involving many nations.

I am not overlooking the argument that France is thus invited to desert her ally. The argument is fallacious. Her ally was embarking on something which did not vitally concern her. When we say, on the other hand, that Germany was justified in standing by Austria in an unusual degree, we say it because to Austria the punishment of Serbia was vital. It is useless to argue with those persons who will not see that this question was, as I say, vital to Austria. I have compared the situation before, and I compare it again, to that of a black Republic in Mexico filling our southern states with literature by every mail intended to rouse the blacks of the United States to a union with Mexico. This, and years of it, was, in effect, what Austria was enduring. Her own statement of it to Serbia and the world was even milder than what historians portray.<sup>1</sup> To Austria as a principal, therefore, there was a question involved more vital by far than any to which Russia could appeal.

The ally of Germany, in other words, was exposed to a peril to which the ally of France was not exposed. I lay aside, because I disdain them as both untrue in fact and unfounded in history, that Russia had either a sphere of influence in the Balkans, or disinterested sentiment in any of the Balkan States.<sup>2</sup> Her interests and intentions there were predatory only. Serbia was but the wedge, as at one time Bulgaria was to be the wedge, with which Austro-Hungary should be broken up. Thus, the interests of the Austrians were plainly the greatest as this crisis came on—the outrages against her undeniable.

Passing now from Austria, let us consider the position of Germany. That country had, and nobody knew it better than Poincaré and his friends, or Sazonoff and his coterie,

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 13. *Austrian Red Book*, 19 and enclosure, also the Appendices to that book detailing the Serbian crimes and propaganda.

<sup>2</sup> Never had Austria-Hungary or Germany conceded to Russia a sphere of influence in the Balkans. On the contrary, as far back as 1854, they had warned her against any such claim. Indeed, one of the reasons for which Russia was willing to get into the recent war was the establishment of just that sphere of influence which had never yet been acknowledged.



but one friend left among the Great Powers of Europe. These men knew, and exultingly knew, that Germany was completely encircled by the most powerful possible combination of European military and naval strength. To Germany, accordingly, the maintenance of the Austro-Hungary dominion was of the very utmost importance. Obstinate, indeed, is the man who will say that either Russia or France had, in the Serbian question, any kind of interest as great as that of Germany. In a word, to reason that France, before Russia proclaimed or pretended affection to Serbia, should desist from taking that necessarily offensive position was not asking her to desert an ally. On the other hand, to say that Germany should at the outset have warned Austria not to take some independent action against this turbulent and insulting little Government, would have been asking Germany to desert an ally and not to support the course of justice between nations.

The whole consideration of the crisis of July 1914 has hitherto gone upon the unjustifiable presumption that Russia had a sphere of influence, a tenderness of feeling, and even an historic mission in the Balkans. Perhaps we can now think of the thing in a different way. We have seen revealed, what for that matter we ought to have seen before the war, the utterly degraded character of the Russian Court; the absurdity of ascribing to any of its actions motives elevated or humane. Its inconceivable debauchery has been laid bare. But the point I make is that no outside Government, except possibly the German, was aware so much as France of the corruption of that Court. The extent of bribery, its ordinary daily use in every channel of Russian affairs, the use of Russian money on the French Press, these and a thousand marks of the unreliability of the Russian were perfectly well known to the Government of France. That there was no real sympathy in the Court of Nicholas II even for the free Republic of France was perfectly well known to those negotiators, who so often rejoiced in the banquets of Petrograd.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Professor Fay, *op. cit.*, mentions that on the last visit of Poincaré to the Czar, the military bands were welcoming the President of France with the Marseillaise, while the Cossacks of the suburbs were beating strikers for singing it.

The second thing that we notice during the tragic month of July was that while England was making laudable efforts to accomplish an adjustment, the French, according to their own record, were doing little. One might almost say they were doing nothing. They were behaving themselves just as we have seen in the first chapter they might be expected to behave themselves. Let us not forget the words of the Belgian Ambassador to his Home Office :

I have already had the honour to tell you that it is MM. Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand and their friends who have invented and pursued the nationalistic and chauvinistic policy which menaces the peace of Europe, and is the determining cause of an excess of military tendencies in Germany.

This surely is from a friendly source, this criticism, and it was in January 1914. Let us not forget either what Benckendorff had to say just a little while before—that France was the only one of the Great Powers which would look upon war without great regret.

One would think from the horror and indignation which France poured out to mankind upon Germany's declaring war against her, that during the month of July, when war was so clearly approaching, she would have left an indelible record of remonstrances and caution to her unscrupulous ally. Industry indeed would it require, though, to find this in the French Yellow Book or in any other official correspondence of that period. Indeed, one accustomed to the language of diplomacy will not be at a loss to read between the lines of many communications from the Quai d'Orsay a silent satisfaction that the hour of revenge was approaching.

Let us take, for instance, Viviani's telegram of July 30th, the day before the public admission by Russia of her general mobilization.<sup>1</sup> On the preceding day Paléologue<sup>2</sup> had warned him that Russia was mobilizing. Remember now, that at this time Germany was not mobilizing at all and that Austria had mobilized only a few army corps against Serbia remote from the Russian frontier. Viviani, instead

<sup>1</sup> *French Yellow Book*, 101. Numerous commentators have pointed out discrepancies and suppressions in this State paper. See, for example, Alfred Pevet's *Les Responsables de la Guerre*, pp. 207, 451; also Dupin.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 100. Paléologue was the French Ambassador at Petrograd.

of imploring Petrograd to be patient, ingeniously tells her that in taking any "defensive measures" they refrain from doing anything that may give the Germans a pretext for mobilization.

What cant is this "defensive measures"! Nobody was threatening to invade Russia. That either Austria or Germany should, with the French Army in the rear of them, begin an attack on the enormous territory of Russia, in which they would be lost, was an absurdity. What Viviani craftily meant was that Russia should go on with her mobilization in as secretive a way as she could.<sup>1</sup> Nor am I satisfied with Paléologue's telegram in answer to this from Viviani. He tells the latter<sup>2</sup> that the Russian Government is again showing that it neglects nothing to avert the conflict. He tells him<sup>3</sup> that the night before the Russians have even stopped their mobilization. This was untrue.

The hypocrisy of Paléologue is unmistakable. Russia, he says, is mobilizing on account of "most serious danger" and "reasons of strategy." The latter phrase was honest enough for there was strategy to steal a march upon the Germans, as, to the misery of East Prussia, it did steal a march; but when Paléologue speaks of Russia mobilizing because of danger to herself, he says that which is not true, and which he knew was not true. It is interesting to note at this point the contempt of French critics of Poincaré for this ambassador to Petersburg. Paléologue had been in the Home Office at Paris and, it is charged, was substituted as a more aggressive type for Georges Louis to please the bellicose Isvolsky.<sup>4</sup>

Here we must bear in mind that Viviani and Poincaré had,

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to notice the way in which Paléologue and Viviani are apparently trying to make for subsequent use what lawyers call "a good record." The Ambassador, in communicating with Viviani, never speaks of mobilization in his early telegrams, but only of "military preparations," and this is the phrase that Viviani uses in reply. Nobody knew better than the two that Russia was in mobilization, at first partial and then general, and that "mobilization" was the truthful word.

<sup>2</sup> *French Yellow Book*, 103.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>4</sup> De Toury, *op. cit.*, Pevet's *Les Responsables de la Guerre*. Delcassé first took Louis's place by appointment from Poincaré, who had intended to send Paléologue at once, but who heard some newspaper gossip and was deterred. De Toury, *op. cit.*, Paléologue went to St. Petersburg in January 1914.

a day or two before, returned from Petrograd, where, in all reason we may suppose, the strategy of correspondence had been carefully laid down. The visit of the French statesmen so late in July to the Czar of Russia must be regarded by sensible men as a council of war. The French Ambassador at Petrograd must unquestionably have been present at many of these conferences. He must, according to all reason, have been thoroughly informed by the French President and by Viviani exactly as to what steps should be taken on each hypothesis of action by Germany or Austria. We know now that immediately after the departure of Poincaré and Viviani on their return to Paris, the Russian mobilization secretly began. Though not made formal and exposed until the last day of July, it was actually going on.<sup>1</sup>

Paléologue, on the 29th, had advised Paris that the Germans would remonstrate against "Russia's military preparations." Viviani was then on his way back to Paris. On the 30th, Paléologue reaches Viviani and tells him that the German Ambassador has again asked Russia to cease her military preparations and has stated that Austria would not infringe the territorial integrity of Serbia.

All this time Germany was not arming and Russia was. All this time Austria was not arming against Russia and Russia was arming against Austria. Since no haste in Russian mobilization could save Serbia, her mobilization would only tend to force a German mobilization, and, as I have said, we look in vain for any French remonstrance against this fatal step.

It was on the 31st that Paléologue sent to Viviani the following telegram. He who understands the language of diplomatic dispatches can expect the French Ambassador to send a message which, if exhibited, will make good matter for his side. This practice is common enough in diplomacy. It is, however, seldom carried further than either a misstatement or a concealment of facts, or the use

<sup>1</sup> See Professor Fay's article. See also Eggeling and Hoeniger and Bogitsevich, *Causes of the War*, where he states that going from Berlin to Warsaw on the 28th of July, he could see no German preparations, but that as soon as he crossed to the Russian side, he could perceive mobilization on a great scale. Dupin, in *Considérations*, etc., p. 10, and *Le Bulletin Officiel de la Société d'Études documentaires de la Guerre*, April 1922, specifically argue a falsehood of Viviani in conceding the Russian mobilization.



of vague terminology. When it expands into argument, we have a peculiar reason to suspect the writer. Bearing this in mind, we ask why Paléologue thought it necessary in the following dispatch to tell Viviani, who had just been in Petrograd, more than the simple fact that Russia announced herself as constrained, in the circumstances, to order mobilization.

ST. PETERSBURG, *July 31, 1914.*

As a result of the general mobilization of Austria and of the measures for mobilization taken secretly but continuously by Germany for the last six days, the order for the general mobilization of the Russian Army has been given, Russia not being able, without most serious danger, to allow herself to be further outdistanced. Really, she is only taking military measures corresponding to those taken by Germany.

For imperative reasons of strategy, the Russian Government, knowing that Germany was arming, could no longer delay the conversion of her partial mobilization into a general mobilization.<sup>1</sup>

In this short telegram there are three improper statements. First, Austria had not yet made her general mobilization, which only occurred on the same day as the Russian,<sup>2</sup> and for that matter was not ordered at all until after positive knowledge that the Russians had been secretly organizing, as they have to admit they had been partially mobilizing during several days previous against Austria. The next improper statement was that the Russian general order resulted from measures secret or open taken by Germany that could furnish any fair pretext for this action by Russia. Undoubtedly, Germany had been cautioning her military chiefs and looking generally to her defences, but the evidence is overwhelming that nothing was attempted by her remotely comparable to the partial and general mobilization by Russia.

Plain, indeed, did this appear after the war broke out. The devastation of East Prussia showed that the Germans had delayed too long, and that Russia had made a most successful mobilization in secret.

What does Paléologue mean, too, by saying that Russia must not allow herself to be "further out-distanced"? She

<sup>1</sup> *French Yellow Book*, 118.

<sup>2</sup> "Practically simultaneous," Fay. *British White Book*, 127, reports August 1st. Morel's *Analysis of Events* shows that the Austrian mobilization was several hours later. Later French students think the same.

was already out-distancing everyone else. She was able to pour 800,000 troops into East Prussia several weeks before even the Germans thought it possible.<sup>1</sup>

Why also was it necessary for this Ambassador, who had been talking to Viviani in Petrograd a few days before, to explain that "really" Russia was only taking military measures corresponding to those of Germany, a statement both untrue and argumentative? The more we read this telegram, the more we see that it was out of the course of diplomatic advice between parties on the same side.

Much has been made by thoughtless persons of that action of the French Government ordering their mobilized troops to keep back ten kilometres from the German border. This was on July 30—a peaceful step, which Viviani asks his London Ambassador to mention to Grey.<sup>2</sup>

Now let us remember that this was on the 30th. Germany had not yet declared war on Russia, and, of course, not yet upon France. Germany had not yet even mobilized. Let us think a moment. Let us recur to the terms of the Alliance between France and Russia. Have we not already seen that, not leaving all strategy to their generals when war should break out, these two Powers, in the very terms of their treaty, had prescribed that the armies of each should so act with reference to the other that Germany should have to fight both countries *at the same time on both fronts*?<sup>3</sup> The French were able to make the merit of this peaceful appearance because their treaty with Russia was still a secret.

In an instant the peaceful appearance of this French precaution is gone. It was part of the strategy of war. What folly would it have been in France to have precipitated the war by any accidental collision of troops at the border! The policy of France obviously was, while mobilizing, to delay the actual conflict until the vast Russian forces were well collected on the German frontier. Every day that

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, Chapter X. Lieut.-Gen. Macdonough's statement that Germany had calculated that Russia could not advance any force before the middle of September, an erroneous calculation, obviously based on Russian deception. As we have seen, *ante*, Hindenburg could call but 200,000 troops to meet the Russian armies of 800,000.

<sup>2</sup> *French Yellow Book*, 106.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter VIII and Appendix C.

she delayed the actual war between herself and Germany after she was sure that the conflict between Germany and Russia must occur, she was gaining vastly in the helplessness of Germany to dispatch to the French frontier the great forces necessary to meet an army which, even on that side, was equal to her own. One might allow a doubt in favour of France about this matter of the ten kilometres if we had seen on her side urgent and strenuous invocations to her ally to defer that mobilization which after all could not be quick enough to save distant Serbia for whom it was said to be ordered. But there is no record of French endeavour to restrain Russia.

In the chapter following this, I shall point out something else in the French behaviour—a deliberate attempt to make the war certain by forcing England to declare that she would be on the side of France and Russia. This argument about England was indeed plausible, but when analysed it will be found to be just what the English knew it to be when coming from so militant a Government as that of Poincaré. All that Russia was waiting for was the certainty that England also would be on their side. It was not Germany but Russia that had to be restrained. Most diligently, however, from all sides did the French and Russians move upon England to make public such an assurance.<sup>1</sup> Those who have but lightly looked at the surface may at first applaud this importunity by France and Russia, but it is impossible for anybody who has studied the whole situation to look at it that way.

To resume as to Germany's situation: France was seeking advantage for her ally, Germany only safety for hers. Austria-Hungary could not possibly permit the plots of Serbia to continue. She maintained, and maintained to the last, that she had a right to make a settlement directly with that country. Did not our own country finally have to throw into Mexico, without proclaiming a state of war, such bodies of troops as would punish in Mexico a banditry which the Government of Mexico either could not or would not control? Does anybody believe that the United States or England, in a similar trouble as that between Serbia

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 99, 116, 119.

and Austria, would have permitted any distant third Power, even though related by blood and actuated by pretended affection, to control or to throw into the general politics of the world for conference a punishment directly merited between the original parties? We must remember always that never had the Central Empires acknowledged a Russian sphere of influence in the Balkans. England never had recognized it in any clear fashion until after the Salisbury Ministry came to an end in 1902. Nor must we forget a certain fair historical comparison. England and France had gone to war to keep Russia out of the Dardanelles, an action on the part of the two former not necessary to their immediate safety, but necessary to what they thought the safety of their remoter possessions. The argument of Austria-Hungary, and for that matter of Germany, too, for a sphere of influence over that of Russia in the Balkans, was every way stronger than that asserted by England and France against Russia in the Crimean War.

At all events, two things were clear—a decisive settlement of the Serbian question and prompt and vigorous punishment of Serbia was vital to Austria; and the determination of Russia to make this her quarrel was a determination to destroy if she could the power of Austria-Hungary. At this point, the necessity of Germany was plain. As Sir Edward Grey admits, Germany could not afford to see Austria crushed. She must stand by her “without any reference to the merits of the dispute.”<sup>1</sup> Such was the painful situation of Germany; such the situation of which France determined to take advantage.

We have seen in preceding pages the enormous military and naval preparations of the Allies. We have seen the secret confession by the German Chief of Staff that the odds against Germany were tremendous. We have seen that Germany was a country without a single natural frontier for defence. We know that France, protected from Spain by the Pyrenees, from Italy by the Alps, and by the sea against any great invading force, had but the German frontier to watch. We know that Russia could deride even a threat of invasion and could make herself immediately

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 46.



safe by mere retirement. But Russia was on the offensive. In addition to the boastful threats in the *Bourse Gazette* <sup>1</sup> reckless disclosures of her bad purpose were common, as when the military journal *Raswjaldtschik* on New Year's Day, 1914, exclaimed: "We are arming for a war of extermination against the Germans." <sup>2</sup> Fancy such talk in responsible journals in a time of peace. This was months before the war. Yet no German army had in many centuries attacked Russia. There had been long, profound peace. What was wrong then? Germany would not permit Russia to expand into the Balkans.

Germany, of all the Great Powers, was the one most exposed, and Germany knew herself to be outnumbered. Now what was her behaviour? The time has passed when any fair student of that terrible era will argue that Germany set out to conquer the world. This language, which we were so fond of uttering in the period of our ignorance and at the height of our irritation, must be abandoned. Everything shows no such hope inspired the breast of any German military chief. The question was, could they preserve their ally in what they deemed a just cause by stiffness in negotiation?

There is no doubt that from the start the Germans were determined that Austria should have, as far as possible, a free hand in the settlement of this dispute with Serbia. Germany had interfered once before, in 1913, after Austria had gone to the great expense of mobilization. The Serbians were continuing, with full reliance upon the Russians, that policy of ceaseless intrigue and of organized, hostile propaganda which must sooner or later break up a country which was adjacent to Serbia and which had as good a moral and political right to regulate her behaviour as the Court of Petrograd. It was Russia that was determined to have her hand in this business. If she could succeed by diplomatic pressure and a show of military strength in forcing the Austrians to throw the Serbian question into a European conference, she would obtain the thing which she wanted,

<sup>1</sup> Note, *ante*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Von Eggeling, who cites other such utterances on Poincaré's visit of 1912, *Die Russische Mobilmachung*, *passim*. Eggeling was German Military Attaché at St. Petersburg.

but which was dangerous to European peace, a right of being first consulted in Balkan disputes. That it was her purpose to gain a foothold in the Balkans and thus ultimately control both the Dardanelles and the Adriatic is too plain to be repeated.

I will frankly say that if the Germans had thought themselves strong enough, they would have gone to war with Russia voluntarily, rather than admit her to any power in the Balkans, for the whole Russian history proved her policy of gradually encircling and strangling the country to the West. But Germany well knew that she was not strong enough to carry on a war with Russia and fight a war on two fronts with the undoubted policy of England (apart from any special agreement) to protect France against any considerable loss at the hands of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

The policy of Berlin in the diplomatic controversy is perfectly plain. Germany would support Austria to a diplomatic victory. Second, Germany must not get into war with Russia even if the diplomatic conflict be lost.

We, accordingly, see in the first part of July a determined attitude at Berlin against throwing this Serbian question into a proposed European conference in which Austria would be outvoted. To what extent the Germans had advance knowledge of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia is not definitely known, nor is this to my mind of final importance, because after the ultimatum was served and Serbia almost totally acquiesced, the Berlin Government was satisfied. The delight of the Kaiser is undeniable. His very handwriting, quoted by his worst enemy, Kautsky, discloses this, the memorandum which he endorsed on the communication that Serbia had yielded. Now, he cried, there is no need for war! On such a record, he would not, like Austria, have ordered mobilization against Serbia.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *British White Book* shows that Germany conceded England's never being willing to see France crushed by Germany. The most the Germans hoped for was the neutrality of England, and most of the German heads did not even hope for that. It was perfectly clear at Berlin that an invasion of France by Germany, if successful, would amount to a clash with England.

<sup>2</sup> *Kautsky Document*, No. 272. On the fall of the Empire the Imperial archives were submitted by the new Government to free search and public report by this bitter enemy of the Hohenzollerns.

The monarch seemed to be perfectly happy. The Kaiser, who up to this time had been stern against a Russian diplomatic foothold for future pressure in the Balkans, now becomes determined that Austria must avail herself of a peaceful settlement. He resolved that Austria should not force a war. He so instructed Bethmann.<sup>1</sup>

Events followed rapidly. Let us consider a week fatal to mankind. On the night of Monday, the 27th, Bethmann telegraphed to Tschirsky, the German Ambassador at Vienna, the latest proposal received from Grey. A mediation instead of a conference should be had. The Kaiser had been invited to be himself a mediator. Bethmann's telegram was as follows :

We cannot reject the rôle of mediator and must place the English proposal before the Vienna Cabinet for consideration. Request Count Berchtold's opinion on the British proposal, as well as on Sazonoff's wish to negotiate directly with Vienna.

He supplements this on the next day with another telegram :

The refusal of every exchange of views with Petrograd would be a serious mistake if it provokes Russia precisely to armed interference, which Austria is primarily interested in avoiding. We are ready, to be sure, to fulfil our obligations as an ally, but must refuse to allow ourselves to be drawn by Vienna into a world conflagration frivolously and in disregard of our advice. Please say this to Count Berchtold at once with all emphasis and with great seriousness.<sup>2</sup>

This telegram was sent late Tuesday night, and still without any response. Wednesday now came, the 29th, and Bethmann's alarm became apparent. He became suspicious that something was being concealed from him. Again telegraphing Tschirsky, he says :

I regard the attitude of the Austrian Government and its unparalleled procedure toward the various Governments with increasing astonishment. . . . It leaves us wholly in the dark as to its programme. . . . I must conclude that the Austrian Government is harbouring plans which it sees fit to conceal from us in order to assure herself in all events of German support and avoid the refusal which might result from a frank statement.

<sup>1</sup> *Kautsky Document*, No. 293. "No cause for war any longer exists."

<sup>2</sup> *Die Deutschen Dokumente*, No. 396.

Austria had indeed been concealing something which the world has supposed the Germans knew, but which it is now plain they did not—the Wiesner report. The latter had been sent by Berchtold to discover whether the Serbian Government had been directly or indirectly the backers of the murderers at Serajevo. His report had been adverse. He did not go so far as to say in it that the Serbian Government might not have been connected with the murders, but that it could not be proved. Doubtless Berchtold was infuriated at what he believed to be the usual alibi of the Serbian Government. No doubt he felt the maddening perplexity of one who is practically convinced that habitual criminals have been repeating their crimes, but who has to confess that he has not the proof to convict them. Whatever may have been his feelings he saw at once that he could not make the record known to Berlin and expect the Berlin Government to go nearer to the verge of war in order to support Austria.<sup>1</sup> Berchtold's guilt is plain.

Returning now to Bethmann. Thursday had been reached, the thirtieth. In his endeavours to get an answer from Vienna, he now becomes more insistent :

If Austria refuses all negotiations, we are face to face with a conflagration in which England will be against us, Roumania and Italy, according to all indications, will not be for us, and we shall stand two against four Powers. Through England's opposition the main blow will fall on Germany. Austria's political prestige, the military honour of her army, as well as her just claims against Serbia, can be adequately satisfied by her occupation of Belgrade or other places. Through her humiliation of Serbia she will make her position in the Balkans, as well as in her relation to Russia, strong again. Under these circumstances, we must urgently and emphatically press upon the consideration of the Vienna Cabinet the adoption of mediation in accordance with the above honourable conditions. The responsibility for the consequences which would otherwise follow would be for Austria and for us an uncommonly heavy one.<sup>2</sup>

Germany, it is plain, was doing her best to force Austria to come to her senses. In the Berlin Cabinet, indeed, the

<sup>1</sup> *German White Book*, 1919, presents the German evidence of this concealment of Wiesner's report, and investigators have uniformly accepted this proof. The translations that I am setting out at this point in the narrative are from Professor Fay's treatise.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 395. Why could not France have sent a similar telegram to her ally, begging her not to mobilize that tremendous army ?



opinion may have been that Austria was still morally in the right and that the time had at last come when she should be allowed to settle directly between herself and Serbia the continuous eternal wrong. Whatever may have been the opinion of the Berlin Cabinet as to Austria's rights, that Cabinet, nevertheless, was determined to force a compromise. The opinion so widely held by the public that Germany backed Austria *to the last* in delight at an opportunity for aggressive war is manifestly unsound and by all investigators of the subject is now abandoned. The only reproach that can be put upon the Berlin Government is that it did not exert itself upon Austria early enough. In my opinion that criticism is not fair. Austria had a moral right to punish Serbia in a military manner. Germany believed, and in my opinion rightly believed, that remonstrances, councils, reprimands, formal humiliation and promises of good behaviour, meant to a Government like that of Serbia neither shame for the present nor decorum for the future.<sup>1</sup>

Abstract right, however, could no longer be considered. Austria must abandon her policy. She must accept the merely diplomatic victory she had gained which, while it would insure her no peace for the future from Serbia, would at least defeat either Russian intervention or distinct recognition of a Russian sphere of influence in the Balkans. Up to the beginning of the fatal week Germany probably expected that the Government of Russia would be actuated by the principles of peace, or that if she were not, either her ally France or the English Cabinet, so friendly to Russia would prevent her from seizing every possible pretext for invasive war. One has only to look at the map of Europe to see the falsity and hypocrisy of Sazonoff's remark that the protection of Serbia was "to Russia a question of life and death."<sup>2</sup> Russia nowhere touches

<sup>1</sup> Pevet in his *Les Responsables de la Guerre* (p. 242) notes the German change of policy at this juncture and comments on the favourable pressure at once exerted. The reasons (he says) were "fear of war under conditions unfavourable both internal and external. They are too natural, too human to be thought less than sincere."

<sup>2</sup> Sazonoff to the English Ambassador, Buchanan, August 1st, after his refusal to stop mobilization on the German demand. *British White Book*, 139.

Serbia, nowhere is near Serbia. Austria, bordering on Serbia, had *twice* before 1914, that is to say in 1912 and 1913, had to mobilize on account of her policy and her wars.

Thursday having expired without a reply from Austria, it now became plain from the increasing mobilization in Russia that the Berlin Government must exert itself directly in Petrograd. The Kaiser had returned from his Scandinavian cruise on Sunday, the 26th. He, accordingly, had been watching the events of the past four days and he, too, became alarmed because Austria was not accepting the compromise that would save her face, and preserve a considerable degree of her rights. He now began to take things in hand himself with his relative, the Czar. On Tuesday night, the 28th, while Bethmann was sending his first peremptory telegrams to Vienna, he wired the Czar as follows :

*July 28, 10.45 P.M.*

I have heard with the greatest anxiety of the impression which is caused by the action of Austria-Hungary against Serbia. The unscrupulous agitation which had been going on for years in Serbia has led to the revolting crime of which Archduke Franz Ferdinand has become a victim. The spirit which made the Serbians murder their own King and his consort still dominates that country. Doubtless you will agree with me that both of us, you as well as I, and all other sovereigns, have a common interest to insist that all those who are responsible for this horrible murder shall suffer their deserved punishment.

On the other hand, I by no means overlook the difficulty encountered by you and your Government to stem the tide of public opinion. In view of the cordial friendship which has joined us both for a long time with firm ties, I shall use my entire influence to induce Austria-Hungary to obtain a frank and satisfactory understanding with Russia. I hope confidently that you will support me in my efforts to overcome all difficulties which may yet arise.

Your most sincere and devoted friend and cousin,

WILHELM.<sup>1</sup>

To which the Czar replied the next day, Wednesday, the 29th, as follows :

PETERHOF PALACE,

*July 29, 1 P.M.*

I am glad that You are back in Germany. In this serious moment I ask You earnestly to help me. An ignominious war has been

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 61.

declared against a weak country, and in Russia the indignation, which I fully share, is tremendous. I fear that very soon I shall be unable to resist the pressure exercised upon me and that I shall be forced to take measures which will lead to war. To prevent such a calamity as a European War would be, I urge You in the name of our old friendship to do all in Your power to restrain Your ally from going too far.

(Signed) NICHOLAS.<sup>1</sup>

At the close of the afternoon of the same day that the foregoing telegram was sent by the Czar, the German Emperor replied as follows :

July 29, 6.30 P.M.

I have received Your telegram and I share your desire for the conservation of peace. However, I cannot—as I told You in my first telegram—consider the action of Austria-Hungary as an “ignominious war.” Austria-Hungary knows from experience that the promises of Serbia, as long as they are merely on paper, are entirely unreliable. According to my opinion the action of Austria-Hungary is to be considered as an attempt to receive full guaranty that the promises of Serbia are effectively translated into deeds. In this opinion I am strengthened by the explanation of the Austrian Cabinet that Austria-Hungary intended no territorial gain at the expense of Serbia. I am therefore of opinion that it is perfectly possible for Russia to remain a spectator in the Austro-Serbian War without drawing Europe into the most terrible war it has ever seen. I believe that a direct understanding is possible and desirable between Your Government and Vienna, an understanding which—as I have already telegraphed You—my Government endeavours to aid with all possible effort. Naturally, military measures by Russia, which might be construed as a menace by Austria-Hungary, would accelerate a calamity which both of us desire to avoid, and would undermine my position as mediator, which—upon Your appeal to my friendship and aid—I willingly accepted.

(Signed) WILHELM.<sup>2</sup>

And to this the Czar, late on the night of Wednesday, the 29th, immediately responded :

Thanks for your telegram, which is conciliatory, while the official message presented by your Ambassador to my Foreign Minister was conveyed in a very different tone. I beg you to explain the difference. It would be right to give over the Austro-Serbian problem to the Hague Conference. I trust in your wisdom and friendship.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 61. There was no “pressure” except from the military party, which no doubt dictated this communication.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

The next day, Thursday, while Bethmann's fusillade of telegrams to Vienna had produced no results, the German Emperor, perceiving that Russia was continuing that mobilization, which it would be absurd in her to say was required by that vast country for defence, and which no German mobilization had yet provoked, immediately answered :

July 30, 1 A.M.

My Ambassador has instructions to direct the attention of Your Government to the dangers and serious consequences of a mobilization. I have told You the same in my last telegram. Austria-Hungary has mobilized only against Serbia and only a part of her army. If Russia, as seems to be the case, according to your advice and that of Your Government, mobilizes against Austria-Hungary, the part of the mediator, with which You have entrusted me in such friendly manner and which I have accepted upon Your express desire, is threatened, if not made impossible. The entire weight of decision now rests upon Your shoulders ; You have to bear the responsibility of war or peace.

WILHELM.<sup>1</sup>

We now quote the Czar's answer of Thursday to the preceding telegram of the German Emperor :

PETERHOF,

July 30, 1914, 1.20 P.M.

I thank you from my heart for your quick reply. I am sending to-night Tatischeff (Russian honorary aide to the Kaiser) with instructions. The military measures now taking form were decided upon five days ago, and for the reason of defence against the preparations of Austria. I hope with all my heart that these measures will not influence in any manner Your position as mediator, which I appraise very highly. We need Your strong pressure upon Austria so that an understanding can be arrived at with us.

NICHOLAS.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing apparently could stop Russia, and we shall soon see the reasons why, reasons which at once justify the German military party's lack of faith in Russia and make almost pathetic the efforts of the German Emperor to stop, through the Czar, the scoundrels who had charge of the great weapon

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 77. This telegram and the Czar's, which is quoted, probably passed each other in transmission. There has been some discussion of this, though I think it unimportant. It was clear that Russia could wait. *German White Book*, 1915, 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79. *German White Book*, 1915, 23-A.



of Russia. A desperate attempt having been made for mediation by the Berlin and British Cabinets, and the willingness of Germany to participate in the mediation having been evidenced, the Czar now, on Friday, telegraphs the Kaiser again :

July 31, 1914.

I thank you cordially for Your mediation, which permits the hope that everything may yet end peaceably. It is technically impossible to discontinue our military preparations which have been made necessary by the Austrian mobilization. It is far from us to want war. As long as the negotiations between Austria and Serbia continue, my troops will undertake no provocative action. I give You my solemn word thereon. I confide with all my faith in the grace of God, and I hope for the success of Your mediation in Vienna for the welfare of our countries and the peace of Europe.

Your cordially devoted,

NICHOLAS.<sup>1</sup>

The reader now pauses and wonders why, with this telegram from the Czar, the thing could not have ended peaceably. He must, therefore, hear that the efforts of the Czar and the Emperor were defeated by the Czar's military officials. The whole bad thing was revealed after the Russian Revolution, when the new Government of Russia resolved to expose the infinite debauchery and corruption of the Russian Court. Particularly was the new Government determined to find the reason why Russia, who had no fear whatever of invasion, could not have waited, but threw upon Germany, a country which was much more dangerously situated, the burden of sitting quietly by during the mobilization of the colossal Russian Army and its perceptible movement toward the German frontier.

Professor Oman, in a brochure issued in 1919, as a semi-official publication from His Majesty's Stationer Office, has given some detail of the intrigues of Sukhomlinoff, Minister of War, and Jaunuschkevitch, Chief of Staff, as revealed at their impeachment and trial. Though Professor Oman's book is prepared with a distinct bias against Germany, it reveals enough to show that no English Government, with either an enormous navy mobilizing in France

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 88; and his general mobilization went on just the same.

or a colossal and hostile army mobilizing in Scotland would have had half the patience that the Kaiser showed at this time. Sukhomlinoff confessed that after the Czar had received these telegrams from the Kaiser, the Czar called the Minister of War up by telephone and told him to stop the mobilization. At that time the Czar thought the mobilization was only partial. It was really already general, a procedure for which the direct authority of the Czar was necessary and had not been given. Sukhomlinoff confessed that in making the mobilization general, he had concealed this from the Czar; nay, more, that he did not reveal it to him in the conversation by telephone. He next admitted that he promised the Czar to stop the further mobilization and not to issue a general mobilization. He frankly admits that he lied to the Czar. He hung up the telephone with a false promise to the Czar, and, he says, went on with the mobilization. His fellow-rogue, Jaunuschkevitch, floundering in his testimony, and confronted at all points with contradictions, left the stand in the same disgusting and humiliated condition. It is too bad that Professor Oman, in a brochure otherwise so excellent, should have attempted any apology for the actions of rogues who were playing with the lives of millions, and that he should suggest that, while it was too bad that they should act in this way, their motives, after all, were "patriotic."<sup>1</sup>

The reader will ask why it was patriotic in a country so secure as Russia to violate the orders of the head of the Government in the direction of peace and with a knowledge that the head of the country which they were about to assail was in direct and friendly overture with their own sovereign. Saddest of all is it to reflect that a military attaché at Petrograd was, on the Czar's changed attitude, about to depart for Berlin with a commission for quick adjustment of the military situation.

The Czar, as we have seen, thought he was stopping the mobilization, but the mobilization went on and, of course, the Germans heard of it. The Kaiser now sent the last message to the Czar before it became necessary to send the subsequent ultimatum to Russia that within twelve

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 68.

hours she cease her mobilization. The telegram from the Kaiser to the Czar is as follows :

Upon Your appeal to my friendship and Your request for my aid, I have engaged in mediation between Your Government and the Government of Austria-Hungary. While this action was taking place, Your troops were being mobilized against my ally, Austria-Hungary, whereby, as I have already communicated to You, my mediation has become almost illusory. In spite of this I have continued it, and I now receive reliable news that serious preparations for war are going on on my eastern frontier. The responsibility for the security of my country forces me to measures of defence. I have gone to the extreme limit of the possible in my efforts for the preservation of the peace of the world. It is not I who bear the responsibility for the misfortune which now threatens the entire civilized world. It rests in your hand to avert it. No one threatens the honour and peace of Russia, which might well have awaited the success of my mediation. The friendship for You and Your country, bequeathed to me by my grandfather on his deathbed, has always been sacred to me, and I have stood faithfully by Russia while it was in serious affliction, especially during its last war. The peace of Europe can still be preserved by You, if Russia decides to discontinue those military preparations which menace Germany and Austria-Hungary.<sup>1</sup>

But the military party at Petrograd had now entire control. Deceiving the Czar, they pressed forward to a point at which something would be done by Germany that would furnish a justification for their course, as lawyers say, by relation. The Russian mobilization continued. That mobilization had gone already far beyond where it should have been permitted by the Germans to proceed. To me, the patience of the Kaiser is incredible. The extent of the Russian standing and prepared army was well known—more than 2,000,000 men. Every day it was being brought up from the interior. Every day while the German representative at Petrograd protested to Sazonoff that they had evidences of this dangerous assembling of troops, the fact was vigorously denied and the Germans quieted by representations now known to be falsehoods.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 89. Professor Fay, in the work so frequently cited, has exceeded Oman in an investigation of the Sukhomlinoff trial. He has revealed most interesting data from Russian newspapers and many contemporary sources, and has analysed the testimony in a manner judicial as well as academic.

<sup>2</sup> The books by Eggeling and Hoeneger contain convincing data to show the unexpected success of the Russian deception in regard to mobilization.

The fact is that if we look at this thing purely from the standpoint of German safety, the Kaiser should have ordered general mobilization a week sooner than he did, or at least have served on Russia his ultimatum that her military preparations cease. The argument of some that Germany, after discovering that Russia was going so far in mobilization and that even after Russia had refused on the German ultimatum to stop the mobilization, should merely have moved her troops toward the frontier is, from a military standpoint, from the standpoint of ordinary common sense, easily answered. This course would have increased the dangers of Germany. It was in a sense, next to Germany's not mobilizing at all, exactly what the Russian militarists would desire. They would then have gained time. They would have had just so much longer period to bring up their forces from the interior. The French mobilization would meantime go on, and France and Russia, under their old but still vigorous and yet unpublished treaty, would act in common and strike at the same time. The French were keeping back from their frontier.<sup>1</sup>

Fundamental in military circles of Europe was this principle in regard to Germany, that if she had to fight both France and Russia, she must strike with extraordinary quickness against France. Russia had the man-power, Germany the swiftness. The totally outnumbered army must depend upon its speed and must act before the two adversaries had all their resources assembled, both before and behind the country that had to defend.

The last sad step had to be taken. On Friday, the 31st, the German Government notified the Russian Government that within twelve hours its mobilization must cease. The mobilization did not cease, and on Saturday, the 1st of

<sup>1</sup> The opinion of all impartial investigators and witnesses accumulates against the Russians because of their mobilization. The latest voice is Nitti's: "When it will be possible to examine carefully the diplomatic documents and to judge calmly, it will be seen that the underlying cause of the world conflict was Russia's attitude." *Peaceless Europe*, p. 12. And again: "One point will always remain inexplicable—why Russia should have taken the superlatively serious step of general mobilization, which could not be and was not a simple measure of precaution. It is beyond doubt that the Russian mobilization preceded even that of Austria. *Ibid.*, p. 84.



August, Germany declared war on Russia. Even on the day of the German declaration of war something had occurred which would have enabled an absolute ruler like Nicholas to stop on the brink of the abyss. Austria accepted the mediation—the mediation which, as she accepted it, was to be between herself and Serbia as two sovereign Governments.<sup>1</sup> Petrograd knew of this acceptance, which was disclosed to Grey in London on the 1st of August.<sup>2</sup>

Another incident may be added. During the close of 1921, Sazonoff, in a Parisian journal, tells that the Czar received a telegram from the Kaiser, begging the Czar, notwithstanding the declaration of war, to keep the troops from the German frontier.<sup>3</sup>

I have said before what I think all impartial persons will agree in, that the actual hostilities were precipitated by the determined policy and resolute corruptness of the Russian Court. Baron Rosen gives it as his opinion that the Russian mobilization necessarily led to war and was prosecuted at the last when both Germany and Austria-Hungary were coming back to their senses. He places the guilt upon all three Russian heads, Sazonoff, Sukhomlinoff, and Jaunuschkevitch.<sup>4</sup> He gives us, too, some details. At dinner with Sukhomlinoff when the latter received a telegram that Austria-Hungary had declared war on Serbia, he heard the War Minister exclaim, "Cette fois nous marcherons."<sup>5</sup> The people, he tells us, were indifferent, but the intelligentsia and the military party were for war.<sup>6</sup> It was Sazonoff and Jaunuschkevitch who, after the military representative was to proceed to Berlin for a conference, obtaining the Czar's ear at Peterhof, stopped the dispatch of the officer and secured on Thursday a re-ordering of the general mobilization.<sup>7</sup>

The horror and hate of war have now passed, I hope, sufficiently into the past to leave us in that tranquillity of

<sup>1</sup> *Austrian Red Book*, III, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *British White Book*, 133.

<sup>3</sup> *La Revue de France*, November 15, 1921. Sazonoff concedes that the German Emperor was nearly frantic.

<sup>4</sup> "Forty Years of Diplomatic Life," *Saturday Evening Post*, August 21, 1920, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, July 24, 1920, p. 132.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, August 21, 1920.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, August 21, 1920. Re-ordering means first lawful ordering of the general mobilization.

mind in which we may ask ourselves whether we would have put off a mobilization of our army so long as Germany did with such colossal forces organizing against us on two frontiers no further apart than Albany and Richmond, Virginia, and the larger of those armies in control of men desirous to glut themselves with the profits of war, incapable of good faith and almost everyone of them spendthrifts and debauchees.

When at last Wilhelm of Germany found himself confronted by a Russia determined on war, when he saw unmistakably that France was cheerfully following, was probably encouraging, and was not, at all events, restraining the military ardour of a Court which no promise could bind, and which looked with lust upon the clean villages, the rich farms and the thriving cities on the level frontier, he saw with fear and emotion that the dreaded day had come, the day predicted by his ancestors, the day by every artifice long postponed, the day when his country must face battle on two fronts against forces united, superior, and led by the genius and valour of France.

To the military ability of the latter, well prepared, were added the inexhaustible reserves of Russia, who, not indeed at the ultimate height of her incessant armament, was nevertheless able to throw into the field at once, without calling on her reserves, more than two million soldiers, equipped as no Russian force had ever been equipped before. To these appalling hosts must probably be added the hostility of England, the certain hostility of England if he should adopt the only mode of defence by which, according to the strategists of Europe, it was possible for him to contend against such odds, a swift campaign against France through Belgium before the Russian Army could be well afield. Merely to defend was sure defeat. To attack France on her own defences meant through delay destruction by Russia. What he had to decide was whether his nation should be overrun by Cossacks or be saved by his hurling her forces through a neutral state which did not like Germany, which spoke an alien tongue and which might later yield her level ground to his foes for a flank assault upon him even if he let her alone.

In a situation so desperate we behold the last of the Hohenzollerns. Where should he turn? What friend remained? The German Army! Invoking the wounds that Germany had received from Bourbon kings and Bonaparte, invoking the French hatred of German unity, to that army he now appealed, an army that forty years of peace had perhaps relaxed, but that still possessed the traditions and was still inspired by the memory of a long line of able kings who had raised Prussia from obscurity to power and had secured to sixty million people both glory and repose.

Though three years have passed, the din of that terrible struggle is still in our ears—the first triumphant dash toward Paris, the blows in the rear by the Russians, the retreat from the Marne, the hard and varying campaigns on the Austro-Russian front, the despair of Germany when Italy also turned against her. How the Germans could survive even a year of combat so universal none could see, but from a thousand hamlets new armies poured forth, as armies arise in a nation when it believes that it is struggling for existence. Roumania is suddenly added to the number of her foes. Germany is surely lost. But Mackensen appears, and three bold strokes render Roumania a ruin, its King and Queen refugees to Russia.

In another terrible year Italy pressed her wedge into Austria, which approached collapse. Then rose again the unterrified spirit of the Baltic. Gathering fresh legions from his hungry realm and still further resources for assault, the Kaiser flings his fury on the Eastern Alps, until the grim ranks of Prussia, bursting through the lofty barrier, rolled on in one great torrent to the Po. Vast Russia fell besides. The world was aghast at the marvel, but the resolution of his enemies was unshaken. What remained? One last colossal effort. In the fourth year of the war, to the astonishment of the world, half-famished Germany bursts upon the Western front a new advance, shocking and bending the mighty line of England—only to fall exhausted at the gates of Paris.

## CHAPTER XIII

### WAS ENGLAND PARTLY RESPONSIBLE?

THE eye of England incessantly scans the world. Should we be told that the fate of this or that little country is of no moment to England, we should be told what is not and cannot be true, for every quarter of the globe is either occupied by her subjects or trafficked in by her merchants. Let the least of nations so much as murmur, the sound will attract her sleepless ear.

We must approach a discussion of this question by conceding to England what none of us willingly concede, what she is not entitled to in any abstract or theoretical sense, and what has enabled her to preserve a pre-eminence over all the nations of Europe, and, until recently, over all the nations of the world. That England should arrogate a privilege of always possessing a navy equal to those of any two European Powers combined is a claim which, upon its mere face, is exasperating. Equally, though, is it exasperating to European Powers, including England, that our own country should set up the Monroe Doctrine. Each of these policies is indispensable to the national security, yet neither involves territorial conquest, the prevention of other states from uniting when kindred, or the dismemberment of any country whatsoever. We, for our part, found at an early day that we must either exclude European force from our neighbours on this continent or adopt standing armies and dedicate ourselves to war or the fear of war.

Equally fair is the English policy. An island country, she could not have been safe during the last century against the great standing armies of continental Europe unless she absolutely controlled the sea, or, acquiescing in a mere equality or inferiority of naval force, should adopt conscrip-



tion, the policy of a nation in arms. Those who upbraid her for insisting upon the superior navy had best reflect what would have happened to Europe if England also had given herself over to a large standing army, which, it cannot be denied, she had abundant riches to support. What safety from British arms would any continental power have felt? The insecurity any part of Europe may have suffered from the British Navy is but trifling to what it would have suffered from a British Army and even a moderate navy combined.

By nobody has the British argument for naval pre-eminence been better stated than by Balfour, who in mere writing, when we are not under the enchantment of his address, puts it thus:

There are two ways in which a hostile country can be crushed. It can be conquered or it can be starved. If Germany masters our home waters, she could apply both methods to Britain. Were Britain ten times master of the North Sea, she could apply neither to Germany. Without a superior fleet, Britain could not even count as a Power. Without any fleet, Germany would remain the greatest Power in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

The truth is that while a masterful navy can inflict great mischiefs upon hostile countries, it can injure them for the most part only in their maritime activities. To be sure in the late war, the British Navy did conduct a blockade, the propriety of which in international law is doubtful, and the effect of which upon Germany was internally disastrous. But it was disastrous to the latter internally only because it was also at war with Russia. Had it not been for this last feature, Germany would have derived inexhaustible supplies of food and of many war materials from the eastern part of continental Europe. It is then true, as a general statement, that the navy of England cannot be used as a means of conquest.

It always seemed to me, therefore, that Germany should have accepted from the outset the policy of England. Her

<sup>1</sup> *England and Germany*, 1912, a symposium issued by Stein of the German journal *Nord und Süd*. In spite of ourselves we have to agree with Urquhart, the Member of Parliament, who in 1862 made the often quoted utterance, "The sea threatens while it serves us. . . . England will be the sea's victim the day she ceases to be its queen."

position, I admit, was a hard one. As Germany grew in industry she had to import more from abroad. Her ferries had to pass not only under the guns of England, but under the guns of France to the Atlantic. But while it was distasteful to submit to that situation, nothing could be plainer than that to such a situation she had to submit. She must take her chances in this respect as Holland had taken her chances and had prospered under those risks. Just as France, according to my argument, should have kept away from the dangerous Russian alliance and trusted to her stout army and the natural associations of her neighbours, including England, to protect her, and like Holland be thus preserved from German assault, so Germany should have calculated that if she did not start into a naval competition with England, she would be left alone in her commerce. For she should have reflected that the trade of England itself with Germany was so vast that public opinion in England could never be brought to war with Germany for anything less than the national safety.

The German arguments for a navy, good in the abstract, were wrong from the standpoint of the practical. Never was a more unfortunate policy devised than that of the Kaiser in his longing for the sea. It seized him early and remained with him to the last.<sup>1</sup> True he had excellent argument for it, which some Englishmen have conceded. Even Sir Thomas Barclay, in the symposium of Stein that I have already quoted, drew attention to the fact that Germany had to provide a naval force against France as well. "Will the French Navy," he asks, "be free to increase indefinitely, while the German Navy is in agreement with us not to do so?"

It has obviously become imperative for Germany to increase her fleet in proportion to the needs of its protection against an efficient French fleet.<sup>2</sup>

Nor can we refrain from quoting a revealed dispatch that must in some degree be mortifying to the fair-minded

<sup>1</sup> Our own famous Andrew D. White, in his delightful autobiography, relates conversations with the Kaiser in the early part of his reign. The Kaiser quoted the famous book of Captain Mahan, with which he seemed to be extremely familiar. Baleful preceptor! It was Mahan's book that intensified the English resolution to possess a dominating navy.

<sup>2</sup> Stein's *England and Germany*, p. 63.

people of England, a dispatch from the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, when there was talk of an arrangement between Germany and England for an "exempt year."

My French colleague, whose opinion Goschen<sup>1</sup> had asked, replied that he could in no wise approve of the idea because all the savings which Germany would make in interrupting shipbuilding would be directed to strengthening the army.<sup>2</sup>

All these things may be true, but the policy of a great German Navy was fatal to ultimate peace with England. The latter may have been selfish, undoubtedly was selfish, but her policy was a world policy, which had in no way brought her to the invasion, or at any rate to the conquest of continental soil.

Every nation that comes into the world must take into account the policy of preceding powers. Germany for a long time did so and may at heart have felt toward the last that she was not really taking any attitude which England, even from the English standpoint, had a right to dispute. The building of the fleet, however, was a dangerous step in the alienation of English public opinion, and there never was a greater error in policy or diplomacy than the refusal of the German Government to agree to a "naval holiday" with England. It was a stupid mistake.

It is impossible for one to consider the responsibility of England concerning the recent war without taking a view of her extraordinary history. It is the one country that has aspired to world dominion without continuity of territory.<sup>3</sup> For my own part, I approach the discussion while she is still bleeding, as Burke once expressed it, as one should approach the wounds of a father, "with pious awe and trembling solicitude."

Never pre-eminent in music or painting, England, like

<sup>1</sup> English Ambassador at Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff, February 13, 1914 (see *Ent. Dip.*, 710). In other words, the ally of England was glad to have Germany increase that kind of armament which would either endanger England or increase her heavy naval outlay. Isvolsky from Paris, years before, also reports military circles there as fearful of an agreement between England and Germany to abandon naval rivalry—"Les militaires craignent notamment . . . la cessation de leur rivalité," February 29, 1912 (*Livre Noir*, p. 200).

<sup>3</sup> Venice had a similar policy to be sure, but never ruled more than a small part of the Mediterranean littoral.

Rome, exercised equally the genius of policy and arms. But she exercised something more, a colonization of the vacant parts of the earth by her offspring. As Rome conquered foreign countries by arms alone, so the English conquered the world by colonists as well as arms, each race exhibiting in a singular degree ability to adjust itself to the strange laws of such half-barbarous countries as also came under their sway. Both were unemotional and taciturn. Both, proud of their power, were fond of exhibiting it over foreign nations, the English greatly exceeding the Romans in the quality of mercy. Both were tenacious of custom and obstinate against change. Both have distrusted brilliant and eloquent talent. Neither has ever excelled in courtly graces or softness of manner. The British, rejoicing in manly sports, were the first to prove to the modern world that judgment which comes of health is better than learning and the world was conquered on the playgrounds of England. There were these modern Romans bred. A race of women at the same time was developed singularly resembling the Roman matron, fit to be consorts of determined men, and stoically sending forth their sons to Africa, Australia, Canada and Hindustan. Swallowing their tears, they bowed before the destiny of England. On both England and Rome has been bestowed the glory of bequeathing to distant races and remote posterity works of mighty construction, a universal language and a system of laws.

Let us now consider how England came to take part in this war. In one sense, the story would have to begin in 1904 with Morocco. In another sense, it began with the Franco-Russian alliance. That it began with the latter could be asserted because in my opinion that alliance made war upon Germany by Russia inevitable, a joining of Russia by France inevitable, and a retaliatory blow by Germany upon France inevitable. The last-named event must bring England into the quarrel in spite of herself. France clearly dragged England into this war. England could not stand by and see France conquered, even if France were in the wrong. Just as Germany could not suffer Austria to be overrun by Russia, so England could not suffer France to be overrun by Germany.



One may say that if France were in the wrong, England should have let her suffer the consequences. She could not do so. No matter what guarantees Germany might give England that after a successful war, she would spare France, England could not accept those guarantees. The rage of triumphant war cannot be restrained. Promises which rulers give in advance yield to the passions of their own multitudes. That England had confidence in Bethmann and that most of the English statesmen had confidence in the personal word of the Kaiser would not be enough. These men themselves might die during the contest, and at all events would find in the behaviour either of France or Russia during the war some unexpected injustice which the people of Germany would insist should be made good by annexation of territory.

Believing that England could thus be dragged into the war by France and believing, as I do, that the war resulted from the arming of Russia by France to a degree utterly unnecessary and intolerable, I might let the subject drop and ascribe the English intervention of fate, for I do not think England went into war on account of the violation of Belgian neutrality, but because the invasion of Belgium was the same as the invasion of France, and contrary, in English opinion, to the safety of England.<sup>1</sup>

The English foreign policy is conducted in a manner different from what most Americans believe. England, the most democratic of aristocracies, is also the most aristocratic of democracies. While the people have a free Parliament, they have never ceased to respect the ancient nobility of the realm and to these hands has been confided, and successfully confided, the guidance of England. Out of this has grown the privilege of the Foreign Office to act in secret and to report treaties either not at all or only in such parts as they deem advisable. Even Parliament must not question them further than in formal interrogatories. The safety of the State is presumed to be in the hands of

<sup>1</sup> This is substantially the English attitude as disclosed by their *White Book* and by Grey's speech of August 3, 1914. In the former, as has been mentioned before, Grey finally advised the German Ambassador that even if Belgian neutrality were respected, he would not say that England would stay out of the war.

those who possess the most ancient pledges of loyalty to the kingdom. Only general questions can be put to the Minister, as whether a certain treaty has been made or not. That he should reveal its terms is not proper or expected. We have here, it is perceived, a Venetian Council of Ten, an aristocratical feature heightened by the fact that the Foreign Office is officered either by the landed gentry and nobility or by persons of their class. The advantages of this system are apparent, the continuity of purpose, the secrecy, the handing down from one generation to another of a policy not disclosed by public memoranda, but confided to the memory and the honour of gentlemen.

At the head of the Foreign Office after the Salisbury Government and Lord Lansdowne passed away, was Sir Edward Grey. He came, not only as the successor, but as the initiator of the new diplomatic position and attitude of England. Russia was no longer to be feared. It was the rising power of Germany that must be silently dealt with, a power of the first military consequence, and an invader also of English commerce to such an extent that she would have been regarded as an inevitable enemy at once if the commerce between Germany and England had not itself been so great. The successive steps of Grey under the reign of King Edward must be noticed. While he was not party to Delcassé's deception of the Germans in the first Morocco controversy, in which his predecessor, Lansdowne, participated, he accepted the position of not revealing what his predecessor had secretly done and of standing stoutly by France in the concealments and misunderstanding that ensued. What had been concealed concerning Morocco was not revealed to the English Parliament or public during several years.<sup>1</sup> His place was hard.

The English people were allowed to judge the Germans by the published record without their knowing anything of the secret record. One misunderstanding led to another. The Kaiser acted as was natural for a man to act who knew he had been deceived by France and that the English Foreign Office knew it. The people of England, however, regarded

<sup>1</sup> It first came before the public, it is stated, in an article in *Le Matin*, in November 1911.

him as acting saucily because they knew only of the published record. The worst of it for Grey was that after a while questions were put to him in the House, and a man must have all the casuistry from La Croix to Bellerini to justify his evasions in answering these questions. It is not worth while repeating them for they have been often made public and are probably well known to the reader.

In effect it amounts to this : At the beginning of 1905 the English and French general staffs were in collaboration, as Lord Haldane, then Minister of War, relates, by orders of the Cabinet, but this fact was concealed and until the outbreak of the war it remained concealed. The intimacy between France and England grew steadily greater, until in 1912 it was actually reduced to a memorandum<sup>1</sup> between Grey and the French Ambassador, Paul Cambon. One dislikes this paper, which in effect was an alliance, the more so as several years of military collaboration had preceded it. It affected to leave both parties perfectly free, while both parties were engaging to go forward as partners.

All this time the armament of France and Russia was tremendously increasing. The English now supplemented their arrangement with France by a naval arrangement, which should leave the French fleet free to leave the north coast of France and assemble in the Mediterranean, while the English fleet should protect, in the event of hostilities with a Power which was not named, the northern coast of France. This also was not made public. Rumours were in the air that some such agreement had been made. The House again interrogated Grey. Nothing, the House was assured, had occurred, other than had been made public, that was binding upon England.

While I have already said that England could take no other course than that of military preparation when a war between France and Germany, no matter who was to blame, would be sure to drag her in, it cannot be denied that the closer England allied herself to France, the greater was the exultation in Petrograd, where, we may well believe, such news was quickly received. Upon the French Government, too, what certainly must have been the effect ? It is useless

<sup>1</sup> See *British White Book*, 105.

to deny that the effect of such a memorandum as that between Grey and Cambon would be to create a reckless insolence in the French Cabinet of Poincaré, Millerand and Delcassé.

England, it may be humorously said, has a religious perception of her own advantage and every profit she makes is ordained of God. I do not, accordingly, ascribe to her policy anything else than that it was dictated by the interests of England. At the same time, I believe that Grey, while he did much that encouraged the others, was, at heart, not seeking the war, and I have full faith in the sincerity of his motives in the last month, the terrible month of July.

Grey, nevertheless, must be in part condemned. He allowed Russia to aspire in the Balkans where he knew she would extend her evil power. He knew that everything he did in concert with France was instantly communicated to the court of the Isvolskys, Sukhomlinoffs and Rasputins, to whose unprincipled character he could not shut his eyes. He could not receive Sazonoff, the representative of that bad court and entertain him in 1912, without knowing the consequences of it. He must have known too that Russia would never go to war against Germany unless she were sure of the backing of France, for Sazonoff himself had told the British Ambassador this is Petrograd. "His Excellency replied that Russia could not allow Austria to crush Serbia and become the predominant power in the Balkans, and, *if she feel secure of the support of France*, she will face all the risks of war."<sup>1</sup>

But though Sir Edward well knew that France could prevent Russia's going to war by saying that she would not follow on a Balkan question, he could hardly have compelled France to take this attitude by announcing that he would leave France to her chances in such a war, for he also knew that if France and Germany went to war, no matter for what reason, England would probably have to intervene for France. What he is to be censured for is his not having discouraged Russia and France sternly years before on the Balkan interference. Long, undoubtedly, had the English Foreign Minister known of the rotten intrigues of Russia in Serbia, of the sinister objects she had against Austria, of

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 17.



the utter baseness of every Russian motive in any Balkan State, and finally of the grave ultimate consequences to Western Europe if the Balkans became Russian. This is his fault. He had wily men to deal with in his Continental friendships and in the end he was made use of by them.

Here we may notice again, as we do at all points in the Russian correspondence, that there was no real Russian affection for Serbia, that the Russian diplomats speak of Serbia's possible fate at the hands of Austria, only as a loss to Russia, who might, therefore, not become the "predominant power" in the Balkans. I cannot refrain from adding as to this a quotation from a telegram which the Czar sent to King George on Saturday, the first of August, when, having refused to stop mobilization, he received the declaration of war from Germany. Referring to Austria's action, he says "Object of that action was to crush Serbia and make her a vassal of Austria. Effect of this would have been to upset balance of power in Balkans, which is of such vital interest to my empire."<sup>1</sup>

It is to be regretted that while Sir Edward Grey so frequently acknowledges that this war arose in something not essential to France and had even told the French Ambassador so, he should not also have told the French Ambassador that it was the business of France to keep herself and Russia out of a war on that account. It is too bad that we owe to him the coinage of those phrases "vassal state" and "humiliation of Russia."<sup>2</sup> No baser country than Serbia ever existed and he himself had expressed his contempt for Serbia, as we have already seen, by saying that it would be "detestable" that any of the Great Powers should get into a war concerning her. As for the humiliation of Russia,

<sup>1</sup> Oman's *Outbreak of the War*, p. 105. It will be noticed that the Czar does not make the safety of Serbia "a question of life or death to Russia," as Sazonoff had expressed it. It is, he says, a matter of vital interest to his empire. It was, indeed, a matter of vital interest to Russian ambition. To Austria only, which bordered upon Serbia, was it really vital.

<sup>2</sup> *British White Book*, pp. 90-91. As to Grey's relations with Russia, the Russian Ambassador writes home about a month before the Serajevo incident, saying that in a talk with Sir Edward the latter had remarked that the three Powers had been growing so close as to be almost allies. About this time the Russians were endeavouring to arrange naval concert of action should they attack the Germans on the Pomeranian coast. *Ent. Dip.*, p. 731.

how ridiculous does that sound now? Did the gentlemen at Petrograd seem even in 1914 so excellent and the Government of that country so just and true, that an English statesman would consider a chance of a European war rather than that Russia be abashed? Nobody knew better than Grey, that it would be very well indeed for the peace of Europe if Serbia were made a vassal state of some great Power and compelled to be decent. To no Power did the right of controlling Serbia more belong than to Austria.

The trouble was, though, that Grey had deeply involved himself and his country in his consultations and oral, if not written, commitments to France and Russia.

His country, though, he had in one sense not committed. England knew nothing of what her Foreign Office was doing in this dangerous series of negotiations, the revelation of which Grey undoubtedly awaited with apprehension. When the last day of the fatal week arrived and it became clear that war was to ensue, bitter protest arose from many quarters in England against what was now plainly an enmeshment of England. When, a day or two later, war between Russia and Germany having actually begun, Sir Edward had to address the House and reveal his hand, he could not tell all.

He did not tell, and afterwards was reproached for not telling, what the German Ambassador had suggested to him on August 1, that is to say on the German declaration of war against Russia, that England remain neutral providing Germany had respect the neutrality of Belgium.<sup>1</sup> In my opinion England could not have remained neutral even if Germany respected the Belgian neutrality.

From my point of view it is perhaps immaterial, but I may relate that Grey was challenged as to this on August 27th by Keir Hardie. In his war speech of August 3rd he had not told the House, and, replying to Keir Hardie, he would not say that he had told even the Cabinet.<sup>2</sup> Grey's speech of August 3rd was indeed a masterpiece of shrewdness and of that kind of candour which, while it is not really candour, is a discourse of nimble refinements. What he actually

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, 66, No. 121. Price, *Diplomatic History of the War*, p. 260.

presented England with was *fait accompli*. He addressed a House which was supposed to have the right of deciding on peace or war. But was it actually in a position to decide ? Had not the decision already been made for it ? What Sir Edward admitted was that the arrangements between England and France had gone so far that the French had been allowed to strip their northern shores, where the Germans would, of course, first attack them, of their fleet. This had been sent to the Mediterranean under an arrangement by which England was to protect the north shores. What was this arrangement, except a practical commitment to war ? Was it not, indeed, nearly an act of war ? France he said, had been acting upon this arrangement. The arrangement involved the honour of England, for France was now helpless on her northern coast. It seems to me that it would have been hard for Parliament not to follow into war that Minister who told them he had left them, in spite of this, perfectly free not to follow him into war.

Thus I agree with English critics of Grey who complain of his presenting the House with a *fait accompli*, but still I cannot see what difference there would have been in the result. England could not risk the chance of a French defeat.

Professor Fay, though he holds the Germans guiltless of wanting or provoking this war, blames them for giving *carte blanche* to Austria. This act of the Berlin cabinet was undoubtedly improper. Turning now to France, we see that she, too, had given an ally *carte blanche*, a circumstance so embarrassing now to the French politicians who gave it then, that it has been as little as possible referred to in their memoirs but abundantly revealed in the diplomatic dispatches published at the time by England and by Russia. "France would fulfil all her obligations under the alliance." It was no obligation of that alliance, to be sure, that France follow Russia into a Balkan war, yet the promise was speedily given at the outset, was never withdrawn, and in its final definite form was acknowledged by Sazonoff on the 29th of July, with thanks, while his mobilization was under way.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Post*, this chapter.

Which had the fairer right to give the *carte blanche* to his ally? The ally of Germany was again in turmoil with an insolent bordering state against which she had twice previously gone to the expense of mobilizing her forces.<sup>1</sup> The ally of Germany was struggling with a question vital to her existence. It was not unnatural, after the terrible murder at Serajevo, that the German Government should give its ally the assurance of complete backing. It was not natural that France should give to Russia an assurance of complete backing in an interference by her concerning the affairs of a country separated from Russia by mountains, kingdoms and rivers.

And if it was wrong for Germany to give *carte blanche* to Austria, this at least is now plain that Germany, when she saw that Austria's abusing this privilege might bring on a general war, sternly withdrew the privilege and used every possible exertion to prevent a war. France, on the other hand, did nothing to withdraw the improper and dangerous *carte blanche* which she had given to Russia. To the last, though she did not disclose it to the people, the French Government delivered to Russia not one remonstrance against her pressing her claims beyond diplomacy, nay, continued to support the Russian policy, even after Russia ordered that mobilization, which no German Government in its senses could misinterpret.

Grey then had to do with a French Government resolved upon the risks of war. He was partly to blame for the situation that had arisen. He now would like to put out the fire that the others had created. Could he do it? He had waited too long.

The English White Book begins its disclosures under date of July 20th, but the murder at Serajevo had occurred on June 28th. Within that interval, what consultations had been had, what mutual encouragements exchanged by letter, telegram or conversation between Petrograd, Paris and London? We do not know. Perhaps we shall never

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult for American readers, and indeed for British, to realize what the cost of a general mobilization is. It means that all your clerks, your butchers, your bakers, a large part of your bricklayers, plumbers and the mass of your artisans are suddenly whisked from their occupations. Trade for a while stands still. The State incurs enormous expense.



know. Neither London nor Paris have offered their archives to the investigator. Sir Edward's position was indeed a desperate one. As the people of England saw themselves drifting into a war that must, if it were successful, augment the power of Russia, protests arose from quarters not to be disregarded. A journal of vast influence in England and widely known among the English-speaking race<sup>1</sup> poured out remonstrance after remonstrance. "If Russia," it cried, "makes a general war out of a local war, it will be a crime against Europe."<sup>2</sup> On the fatal 3rd of August, after Germany had declared war, it exclaimed: "*Germany was not free to choose; whether war was to come depended not so much upon what she did as upon what Russia meant to do.* Having convinced herself, and not without cause, that Russia meant war, she conceived that her policy was one for her soldiers to determine upon purely military grounds. . . . Germany's position is graver than at any time since the days of Frederick the Great. . . . If we step in and wantonly back Russia, we do not back her against Austria alone. We back her against her own maltreated and semi-insurgent subjects; we strengthen her brute fist in Finland; we set her up again as a persecutor of the Jews; we put back the clock of free and civilized government throughout far the largest area that the misconduct of any one power of Europe can injure."

Such protests were, as we now sadly know, in vain. England was partially committed to France, and France fatally committed to unscrupulous Russia.

In a preceding page I have conceded to England propriety of war against Germany, if the latter for any reason should invade Belgium. Now what Belgium is to England, the Balkans were to the Teutonic powers. To admit Russia there was ultimate doom. The encirclement by Russia would not be merely economical; it would be military, and it would be conceding to a state with ample territory already an enlargement by no means necessary.

Keeping this in view, the duty of Grey was to let Russia know from the outset that Russian ambitions in Balkan territory could have no assistance from England, and he

<sup>1</sup> *Manchester Guardian*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, July 30.

should have let France know the same. On this basis the Triple Entente would have been an alliance for peace, whereas it became one for war, just so soon as the court of Nicholas II learned that it could possibly have English and French support in its Balkan expansion. That Grey gave some encouragement to Russia is plain from his own words—that Russia must not be “humiliated” and Serbia (for which he contemptuously denied any regard in England) must not be a “vassal state” of the neighbouring Austria, whom with Russian support she was continually vexing and insulting.

Caution by Grey in this matter was all the more necessary because, as I have already stated, it was certain that if France got into war with Germany for any reason whatsoever, England would have to join her.

But to this I return that, no matter whether Grey had committed England to France or not, it lay in the power of France to prevent this war and it did not lie in the power of England to prevent it. France and Russia had outgrown control by England in any war they might desire to launch against Germany. It was a telegram from the Quai d’Orsay to Petersburg that would have put a stop to mobilization and the joyous making of war contracts. France was the only power in Europe that could have stopped Russia.

As for France and her obligations under the Russian alliance, I may have, as I have said before, a bargain to help a man if he be attacked, nay, to help him even if he provoke attack, but is it not my duty to persuade him, if I can, not to give provocation?

Not to be overlooked, though it was left out of the original Collected Diplomatic Documents, was a telegram from Poincaré direct to King George.<sup>1</sup> The date is the 31st, the day before Germany’s declaration of war against mobilized Russia. Nothing throws into stronger light the relative policies of France and England. The telegram of the President was a spirited rhetorical appeal to the King of England to prevent the war. How? By saying that England would be upon the side of France and Russia. Well is it worth while to reflect upon this request. The

<sup>1</sup> This is to be found in Oman’s *Outbreak of the War* (1919).

English King declined it. Again, why ? Because he knew perfectly well that the moment he replied favourably to Paris, jubilation would ensue at Petrograd. So, far from Poincaré's desiring by this declaration on the part of England to avert a war, I have not the least doubt that he intended through it to make the war certain. Well, indeed, was King George advised.

Let us look at the immediate diplomatic history of the thing. What had this Poincaré done hitherto in this desperately exciting month to prevent a war ? What record have we anywhere that Poincaré was a man of peace ? We know, on the contrary, that everyone regarded him as ardent for war. The very Austrians deferred their ultimatum to Serbia until after Poincaré should leave Petrograd on his last visit, saying plainly in their letters that with such a man at Petrograd, Russia would be lashed to war.<sup>1</sup> In a word the ardour of the President of France for a military clash had been for two or three years incessantly revealed. This man, then, who never has elsewhere left a record of urging peace, suddenly, at the eleventh hour, makes an impassioned appeal to the King of England to arrest the terrible forces which the President of France had been and was then setting in motion. It was a telegram sent after the Russians had ordered general mobilization. It was disingenuous in its object. Should it achieve a favourable reply, nothing on earth could prevent the Russians from hurling their armies on Germany. It would take away the last possible hesitation in Russian military circles concerning war. Russia was already in the hands of those circles. It was the Czar only who might hesitate and hold back, the Czar, a timid, hesitating monarch. Let England now declare herself on the side of the Allies and the military elements of Russia would sweep all before them. M. Poincaré was clever indeed. From any point of view, the telegram served his purpose. Should he be subsequently reproached concerning his ardour for war, he could exhibit this telegram. Should the war be prevented, he could exhibit this telegram. The

<sup>1</sup> *Austrian Red Book*, pp. 19-21. Die Deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegausbruch, No. 50. The Austrian letter classes Isvolsky and Poincaré as men "always wanting war."

King of England he placed in a hard position. The argument, was plausible. Let Germany but once see that all the powers were collected against her, she would not fight. If this argument be admitted sound, then it must be admitted that the King, under the advice of his Minister, committed a great wrong.

At first one is easily caught by the plausibility of the plea; but when one has studied very deeply the whole situation he knows that nothing could have more certainly precipitated the war than Petrograd's knowing that England also was with them. It was not Germany that had to be restrained, but Russia.<sup>1</sup>

What had M. Poincaré done to stop the Russian mobilization, which, organizing more than 2,000,000 men on the German border, made mobilization by Germany an act of common necessity. It may be added that several days preceding this 31st of July, the French and Russian diplomats had been extremely busy to have England so declare herself. They had always applied in vain. England would decide at the last moment what it was best to do. For my own part, I was at first disposed to censure the English Foreign Minister for withholding an utterance which did seem calculated to settle this question. Later study has shown me that he did exactly right. True, he intended in the event of war to be upon the side of France and Russia, but I do not believe that he wanted the war and I am sure that he clearly saw that the knaves of Petrograd could not possibly be restrained should they hear that they could count upon England, too.

I cannot help adding what finally induced the French Foreign Office to have their President send this telegram. It was because they had been failing through all the ordinary channels. At last, July 29, came Sazonoff's telegram which is worth while setting out in full. Let us contemplate the following message, sent by a Minister of Foreign Affairs on the eve of a terrible conflict. Can we find in it one word

<sup>1</sup> Since the foregoing was written there has appeared M. Poincaré's *Origins of the War*, in which he sets out both his letter to the King and the latter's negative reply, without, what seems to me essential, an explanation, such as I have made, of the English position.

<sup>2</sup> *British White Book* for the last week of July.



of anxious solicitude? One word of invocation that every possible power be exerted for peace? No; Sazonoff telegraphs to Paris, cold-bloodedly, as follows :<sup>1</sup>

The German Ambassador declared to me to-day the resolution of his Government to carry out its own mobilization if Russia does not cease her present military preparations. These, however, are only a consequence of the mobilization of the VIII Corps in Austria, which has already taken place, and the obvious disinclination of Austria to agree to any form of peaceful settlement of its own conflict with Serbia.

Inasmuch as we cannot fulfil Germany's request, we have no option but to accelerate our armament and to reckon with the probable inevitability of war. Will you bring this to the knowledge of the French Government and express to them our most sincere thanks for the French Ambassador's statement to me, made on their behalf, that we could depend upon the fullest measure of support from our Ally, France.<sup>2</sup> Under the present circumstances this declaration is of special worth to us. It is extremely desirable that also England, without any loss of time, should attach itself to France and Russia, as only in this way will it succeed in averting the dangerous disturbance of the European balance of power.

This, as we have seen, is the callous Foreign Minister before whom the German Ambassador as the British Ambassador tells us, "completely broke down" and from whom he begged some concession as "a last hope" which he could telegraph to Berlin.<sup>3</sup>

Sazonoff, sure now of French support, was resolved on war. The world has been imagining that it was the Germans who were bullying vast Russia, when in fact they dreaded Russia and were bullied by her. I have no doubt that while Sazonoff was talking to the German Ambassador the grand dukes and the tchinovniks were closeted in discussions over vast war contracts and the profits to be divided.

How recklessly the French Government had resolved to stand by Russia in what was not at all essential to the safety of either nation, and armed interference between Serbia and Austria in an affair actually vital to the latter,

<sup>1</sup> *German White Book*, 1919, part ii, p. 120. Notice again, instead of "mobilization" by Russia, "military preparations."

<sup>2</sup> This advance promise the Poincaré Government did not reveal to the French or the world in their *Yellow Book*.

<sup>3</sup> *British White Book*, 97, *ante*, p. 26.

may be seen in a little reminiscence by Raymond Recouly, one of the editors of *Figaro* in July 1914.<sup>1</sup> The complacency with which this gentleman recounts the events of the final ten days when the French Government by a single telegram might have stopped Russia in her mad policy is interesting.

Germany, he held, was standing by Austria. Not considering for a moment how desperate the situation of Austria was becoming under the propaganda of Serbia, protected year after year by Russia, and how important it was to Germany that Austria should not be dissolved and Russia practically take her place, not considering how just the grievance of tormented Austria was against Serbia, he assumes at once both the right of Russia to make this affair her own and of France to follow her into the Balkans. Could anything show better the recklessness of France than the following observations by M. Recouly? The British Ambassador happening to meet him asked half-jestingly, "Do you trust the Russians? We have only half-way faith in them. I may say the same of the Serbs. That's why it would be hard to make my country intervene in a quarrel which concerns only the Serbs and the Russians." "Wait a moment," said I, "I fear that other nations, we for example, may find ourselves immediately involved." "In that case," said he, "the situation will be quite different." With that Sir Francis Bertie left him.

Here we have the English diplomatist's simple view of the thing that France ought not to follow Russia into this horrible business. On the Frenchman his suggestion of the true policy had apparently not had any effect.

Recouly's article is still further worth reading. Nothing can he state fairly. He writes to-day in full knowledge of the diplomatic files that we have seen in the preceding pages but he calmly mis-states them. For example, "The German Ambassador at St. Petersburg had used most threatening language to Sazonoff." This of Wednesday the 29th. The German Ambassador had not used threatening language. He had naturally remonstrated with a man mobilizing and yet deceiving the Germans who had not mobilized. "The previous night William II had sent a

<sup>1</sup> *La Revue de France*, December 15, 1914.

threatening telegram to the Czar." He had not, as the reader can see for himself, and as Recouly, when writing now, will know. But here is a better illustration. "On Friday the 31st Germany sent a veritable ultimatum to St. Petersburg demanding a reply within twelve hours." Why not? Germany had delayed day after day and had been lied to as Recouly must know, and had been deferring mobilization against a vastly superior force several days. But nothing shakes the complacency of the Parisian journalist.

"Since Russia could not commit suicide by yielding." Think of any responsible writer saying this to-day! Let him name any loss of territory or treasure that Russia apart from her bad Court, would have lost by stopping. Recouly writes as one of a war party writes. He writes as a diplomat thinks, in terms of keeping one's face and of not suffering a diplomatic defeat. Rather than that Russia should have a diplomatic defeat where she was seeking to acquire an expansion of power and territory that she did not need, Recouly assumes that it is perfectly fair to throw Europe into war.

M. Recouly is at a loss to understand why the Germans delayed two or three days in declaring war on France, but he guesses that during that period they were inventing a pretext. This is most insincere, for M. Recouly knows that the pretext existed in advance, the alliance of France with Russia to begin with, a pledge specially given by France in the last days of July to support Russia, and finally in the refusal of the French Government to answer the German inquiry as to what side France would take now that Germany and Russia were going to war.

I have dwelt at some length upon Recouly's article because it is a perfect sample of the innumerable articles with which the English-speaking world is deluged, and the totally false impression of the real facts and of the true reasoning about the causes of this momentous event in human affairs.

Sir Francis Bertie's remark to Recouly and the way in which it was received fairly illustrated the difference between the English attitude before the war and that of the French and Russians. Take Sir George Buchanan's immediate

advice to the Russian Foreign Minister. On Saturday the 25th of July, when, as we since know, the Russian mobilization or "military preparations" were becoming rather apparent, the British Ambassador gave Sazonoff sound advice. "I said all I could to impress prudence on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and warned him that if Russia mobilized, Germany would not be content with mere mobilization or give Russia time to carry out hers, but would probably declare war at once."<sup>1</sup> Sazonoff replied that Russia could not allow Austria to crush Serbia and "become the predominant Power in the Balkans."<sup>2</sup> We see here again the thought only of Russian power, territorial or diplomatic advancement.

The English, in short, always had some suggestion toward peace. The French, graciously acquiescing, would do really nothing. At all events, they initiated nothing. The understanding between St. Petersburg and Paris was complete. For another example, take the Quai d'Orsay's languid and conditional acceptance of Grey's proposal of Monday, the 27th that, during a consultation, all military operations should be suspended.<sup>3</sup> Why did not France tell Russia to suspend? Russia had partly mobilized, though not in danger; Germany had not mobilized at all; Russia, I repeat, could wait. France was merely what is called nowadays "receptive." Berlin, to be sure, had been no more than that towards peace offers at first, but she was rightfully resisting a Russian wrong, a Russian intrusion into fields encircling Germany and her ally, and, at all events, Berlin did in the final days emphatically exert herself for peace. France never.

When one looks back upon the appalling suffering in this war, when one thinks, for instance, of the freezing mothers who helplessly died, half-naked, with babes in their arms on the plains of Poland, one's mind goes back to the banquets with which the French were entertained at St. Petersburg. Paléologue describes these with evidently happy memory in *Revue des deux Mondes*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *British White Book*, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 36, 9. The French reply is the enclosure in *British White Book*, p. 51—they would if Berlin would, etc., no hearty concurrence or speedy action.

<sup>4</sup> For January and February 1921.



The diplomat warms in his descriptions of the gaieties in the third week of July, when Poincaré, Viviani, and he drank champagne in a bevy of Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses while they talked of *war*. He dwells on the sumptuous scenes, the gracious ladies. He forgets that the three Frenchmen were under an influence deliberately calculated to turn their heads, to affect men of comparatively simple origin by the endearments of the most powerful personages in European royalty. Poincaré drank to "Two countries with one ideal of peace in strength, honour, and dignity," receiving particularly hearty applause from those manly, conservative fellows, the Grand Dukes.

All the while, during that week, both the French and the Russians were pressing the English Ambassador to take their side, and were disappointed at his telling them England would be neutral.<sup>1</sup>

Before Paléologue was sent to St. Petersburg in January 1914 he had been Minister at Sofia several years. Then he had served in the Foreign Office at Paris. Yet he says that it occasioned him great surprise when Viviani, on his departure six months before the great conflict, told him there surely would be war. Why? Pray what could cause it, exclaims the astonished Paléologue. He really could not see a reason. Viviani is mysterious.<sup>2</sup> Now Paléologue knew perfectly well that the Balkans would yield another crisis in which Russian pressure through Serbia would be again exerted on Austria. What he does not roundly tell us is that *Russia was insisting* that France maintain the intolerable armaments which an increasing number in France were opposing as unnecessary. The Russians were bullying their ally. They were making it plain that *they* wanted French armaments or no alliance.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *La Revue de France*, p. 248. Buchanan, upon the whole, seems to me not to have been neutral at heart, but he had both sense and self-control.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> The quotation, p. 31 *ante*, from the *Bourse Gazette* is only one of many half-threatening articles in the inspired part of the Russian Press that France keep up the three-year military service which was so unpopular.

## CHAPTER XIV

### M. POINCARÉ'S RECENT BOOK

THAT Raymond Poincaré was from the first an aggressive enemy of Germany is as plain as his blind infatuation for the Russian alliance. As to the latter, we have the report of Isvolsky on their first interview in January 1912 when Poincaré became Minister for Foreign Affairs. Poincaré has given him, he states, "Assurance of his firm intention to keep with us the most strict relations and to direct the foreign policy of France in complete accord with her ally."<sup>1</sup>

This statesman, after having been President of France, is again its Premier, because he represents in vengeance the same opinions which were good at the French polls before the war, but, galled by a resolute minority of his countrymen, who are making deadly use against him of the Russian archives, he has written a book called *The Origins of the War*.<sup>2</sup>

It is well indeed that M. Poincaré addresses, for the most part, ears that are willing. What shall be said of a work that commences by intimating that the German Ambassador at Paris was exposing himself wilfully to insult on the streets after the war between Russia and Germany had begun, in order to provoke an occasion for a declaration of war by Germany on France! How ingenious and how unnecessary from any point of view. Germany already had that cause. Did not the Franco-Russian alliance, at least as M. Poincaré had interpreted it, call for French armies against Germany if Russia and the latter should be at war? Nay, during those two or three days in which the German Ambassador was still at Paris, was he not waiting for a reply from France as to what she would do

<sup>1</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, tome i, p. 180. "Telegramme Secret du Maitre de Cour Isvolsky," Paris 2/15 Janvier 1912.

<sup>2</sup> *Les Origines de la Guerre*. The Paris edition appeared late in 1921, the English (Cassell) early in 1922.

as Russia's ally? Had not Germany put the question to France? Had not France replied merely that she would follow her own best interests, though the French Government had secretly pledged itself to action? The French Government was simply gaining time for the Russians to assemble at the German frontier.

Why does M. Poincaré waste time in trying to show that the Germans were then seeking a cause of war against France? It is because he knows that many good people think that France might not have gone into the war if Germany had let her alone. But is M. Poincaré so bold as to say that? By no means. He would be compelled by innumerable documents now disclosed, including his own ambassador's statements to Sir Edward Grey, to admit that even if Germany had let France alone, his country would have attacked Germany on behalf of Russia.

In this book of M. Poincaré's the following things are wholly omitted. (a) The abominable secret treaty of 1917, made while he was President, with Imperial Russia for the division of a great part of Europe between Russia and France. (b) Delcassé's deceit about Morocco, the first Morocco affair not being touched.<sup>1</sup> (c) The de Siebert diplomatic documents. (d) A direct contradiction of the Belgian Minister's charge of 1912-13 that Poincaré and his friends were bringing on a war. (e) The positive fact of Bethmann-Hollweg's insistence that Vienna submit. (f) *The Russian mobilization*.

What M. Poincaré has to admit in spite of himself is (a) that the Kaiser made repeated efforts to come to a good understanding with France.<sup>2</sup> (b) That Delcassé made a revision, which he misquotes, of the Franco-Russian treaty,<sup>3</sup> (c) that France had always in mind the recovery of the lost provinces.<sup>4</sup> (d) That the Franco-Russian treaty was never disclosed before the war and that Viviani, with a copy in his pocket, refrained from reading it to the Parliament (e) That the pacific Georges Louis was recalled from St. Petersburg because the Russians wanted a different sort of

<sup>1</sup> He gives a list of books for perusal on the Morocco question, but wholly omits the one English book that had unanswerably exposed the deceit of Delcassé.

<sup>2</sup> *The Origins of the War*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

man, but he does not answer De Tourny's charge that Isvolsky was behind that change.

What M. Poincaré seems to me to evade is the charge so generally pressed against him, that he committed France irrevocably to Russia, before the war, in her Balkan and all her other policies.

M. Poincaré reinforces his argument by the suggestion that the Archduke Ferdinand and his wife either sought or were sent to Serajevo that they might be murdered and cause a war. This he infers from the extreme deficiency of guards in their progress.<sup>1</sup>

Such as have read the preceding part of my book may well be astounded to see M. Poincaré stating that he "fails to find in the direction of our policy in the past either the shadow of a bellicose will *or even an imprudence*, blunder, or omission that might have been sufficient to justify Germany's declaration of war."<sup>2</sup> This from a statesman whose ministers have always pointed to a downright treaty compelling them, as they argued, "to fulfil the condition of their alliance" and make war upon Germany when Russia should clash with her.

M. Poincaré boasts that the Bolsheviks in their exposure of the wicked files of Petrograd were unable to find any letters of his. Quite true. This statesman had the felicity to be free from the necessity of putting his hand to any communication with the Russian Court. Fortunate man, he was not only privileged, but by diplomatic usage obliged, to deal with Russia through her Ambassador in Paris, where all the mischievous consultations were by word of mouth. It is Isvolsky who left writings, Isvolsky whose record of M. Poincaré from day to day has been exposed and not referred to by the latter in his charming book. Where M. Poincaré, either as minister or as President, desired to communicate directly and in secret with Sazonoff or the Czar, he went in person to St. Petersburg where, enjoying the smiles of an Empress and the embraces of an Emperor, he could, between salvos of artillery or draughts of champagne, tell in whispers his devotion to those policies by which an infamous despotism was to make Europe safe.

<sup>1</sup> *The Origins of the War*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> English edition, pp. 15-16. *Les Origines*, p. 18.



What a record of Poincaré has Isvolsky left us! The de Siebert and the *Livre Noir* collections are a veritable moving picture of the principal man in French affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Not once in all that correspondence do we find M. Poincaré in the slightest objecting to that policy of Russia in the Balkans which must ultimately lead to a general war, and probably give Russia a firm hold not only on the Dardanelles but on the route to the Adriatic and a supreme voice in Europe.

On the contrary, M. Poincaré outdid Russia herself in his zeal. When, for instance, Russia in 1912 was so puzzled by the complications of Bulgaria, Turkey and Serbia as to be for a moment undecided, the man felt grieved. The Austrians were mobilizing against Serbia while Russia was doing nothing! There might be peace!

Not long ago the French Government and the Press were inclined to accuse us of stirring up Serbia, and the dominating note was "France wants no war about a Serbian seaport." Now, on the contrary, they see, with astonishment and uneasiness unconcealed, our indifference to the Austrian mobilization.<sup>2</sup>

Isvolsky tells us this not only of Poincaré but of the French cabinet, which views with unconcern the fact that Russian interference will draw in Germany and then France too, "which is resolved to fulfil the obligations of the alliance."

Isvolsky's letters show how keenly he had analysed the character of Poincaré. He understood the strength as well as the "vanity" of that man and saw how Russia could make use of both. Isvolsky himself was for a war. He makes no disguise of his desires. The Slavs are to triumph not only over the Turk but over Teutons. He can see no other way out of it all than by a "big European war, general and decisive."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At this writing only Volume I of *Livre Noir* has been issued. The collection is, to this date, the correspondence of Isvolsky.

<sup>2</sup> Isvolsky from Paris, December 18, 1912. *Livre Noir*, p. 369. "En visage cette possibilité avec conscience et sang-froid fermement décidé à remplir ses obligations d'allié." What obligations? To help Russia's spreading into the Balkans?

<sup>3</sup> See his extraordinary reflections in a letter revealed by Hartwig, Russian Ambassador at Belgrade, *Livre Noir*, p. 333, dated October 23, 1912. "Dans ce cas il est douteux qu'on pourrait avoir foi en n'importe quels pallatifs et il faudrait se préparer à une grande guerre Européenne générale et décisive."

Poincaré he held firmly in hand, for he had learned how to influence him through the gorgeous flattery of an Imperial Court. The surrender of the French minister was, in fact, complete; the surrender of the man who in the next year was to be the President of a great and free people. Let us see an instance of the submission to which they brought Raymond Poincaré. Russia having concluded with Italy a secret arrangement at Racconigi concerning the Balkans, Sazonoff sent a copy of it to Isvolsky with these instructions:

M. Poincaré hastens to express to me his hearty consent to the conditions you impose.<sup>1</sup>

It seems a terrible thing that one able man should in so important a post as Poincaré's have given himself up blindly to the ambitions of such a Court as that of Nicholas II. Even now, while he has the sense to refrain from any kindly allusions, and indeed any allusions at all to Isvolsky, he has no perception of the way in which the rest of the world must to-day look upon his intimacy with that Court. The man even repeats with pride the ghastly toast he drank to the Czar in July 1914, when they were on the eve of war, "France will pursue, in close and daily operations with her ally, the cause of *peace and civilization for which the two Governments have never ceased to labour.*"<sup>2</sup>

Rasputin, Vladimir, Cyril and the rest, nay, the Czar himself labouring for those noble objects! Had M. Poincaré shut his eyes to literature, to the common complaints of mankind to the fact that after Nicholas II got his loans in 1905 his Cabinet took methodical vengeance on the Duma and the multitude that had tried to obtain a constitutional government while he was too weak, for want of that loan, to set up his army and secret police over the people again? Intelligent people throughout Europe were not ignorant of all this. The book by Prince Kropotkin had made notorious what was commonly understood.<sup>3</sup>

After 1905 the daily average of prisoners rose from 85,000

<sup>1</sup> *Livre Noir*, pp. 357, 360. "M. Poincaré s'empresse de m'exprimer son entier consentement aux conditions posées par vous."

<sup>2</sup> *The Origins of the War*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *The Terror in Russia* (1909). Quotations from it can be found in various pamphlets by Mr. Brailsford, so excellently informed on Russian affairs.

to 181,000. Torture previously omitted, because it had been thought sufficient to let men rot, was now regularly applied. In one year there were 160 suicides. Every day about three persons were hanged without civil trial. In Siberia were added 74,000 political prisoners. Even the timid Duma was roused to a feeble enquiry when suicides in one place in Eastern Siberia became an epidemic. Prisoners, on their arrival, were flogged until they would fall in a faint.<sup>1</sup>

There never was a time, under the administration of M. Poincaré, when even his representatives at foreign courts had any other idea than that they were expected to further Russian ambition in the Balkans. For example, Phillipe Crozier in a recent review relates that during the crisis he took occasion to tell this in plain words to the Emperor Franz Joseph at Vienna: "Russia would not stand by indifferent and see Serbia wiped out and, if Russia goes into that game, France will follow."<sup>2</sup> Pray why? Russia would still be a safe and strong power, no matter what should happen to Serbia.

But let us hear the most damaging, the most abominably naïve contribution to the truth. In September 1914 Paléologue had a conversation in Petrograd with Russia's greatest statesman, Count Witte, long retired. The latter told him bluntly that it was time to wind up (*liquider*) the war, "a stupid adventure." Warmly did the Ambassador of France, the Ambassador of Poincaré, exclaim:

*"Permit me to assure you that if the world to-day is in fire and blood, it is for a cause chiefly important to Russia, a cause eminently Slav, a cause which nowhere touches France or England."*<sup>3</sup>

Infatuated, blind man! This he relates with pride to-day in his own book!

Is M. Poincaré glad or sorry that Russia did not win the war and get the benefits of her secret treaty, made during his administration? Is he glad or sorry that a Czar does not rule the greater part of Western Europe?

<sup>1</sup> *The Terror in Russia* (1909), *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *La Revue de France*, May 15, 1921, p. 356.

<sup>3</sup> *La Russie des Tsars*, tome I, p. 120; "Pour une cause qui ne touchait ni la France ni l'Angleterre."

## CHAPTER XV

### THE SEVERITY OF THE PEACE

FRANCE, stalking through the cemetery of Europe, arms herself against phantoms and would collect unheard of revenue from the tomb. What is to be said of a treaty in the making of which the victors employ Clemenceau? <sup>1</sup> What is to be said of a treaty which imposes sums that no economist will say can be collected, that strips a country of her colonies, of her vessels of commerce, of much of her territory, of a large part of her natural resources, and requires her to pay, after four years of adverse war and nearly five years of blockade, a sum that can be calculated only in the mathematics of astronomers? "This cursing of the guilty people," exclaims Signor Nitti, "has no parallel in modern history. We must go back to the early ages of mankind to find anything of the kind." <sup>2</sup>

Before this treaty could be made, it had to be signed by the vanquished. The vanquished were told that they must either sign it or continue to starve. They signed it. They protested, saying that it was impossible of fulfilment. They were commanded again to sign it or starve. They signed it.

Since the Germans signed this treaty under a protest and amid the cries of their women and children for nourishment, many people throughout the world have joined them in saying that no matter whether the Germans were guilty or not, the sums to be exacted of them were ridiculous and oppressive. To this has been added the voice of financiers and statesmen in every country except France

<sup>1</sup> Of Clemenceau's bold attempt to deceive Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson in a most important detail, I have already made note in Appendix F.

<sup>2</sup> *Peaceless Europe*. See his chapter on "The Indemnity."



that a persistent attempt to collect these sums would complete the ruin of Europe. These remonstrances and cautions have had no effect at the Quai d'Orsay.

Before the Germans were brought to a point where they could be required to sign any treaty, what had recently occurred? Where were they when the war ended? In France. Were they in a general rout, or a great body of them prisoners of war? Very far from it. Though retreating, they had not even yet reached the line of defences on German soil, defences, some of which were most formidable, and all well prepared. "The Germans were retreating in good order. If Germany could hold out for months, as was probable, and the Allied Governments did not make peace on some reasonable terms, there would have been revolution in all the Allied countries."<sup>1</sup>

For some time before the German retreat the President of the United States had been uttering to the world his theory of a lasting peace, for which he prescribed what are known as the "Fourteen Points." Other utterances of his bore upon the same question and these I have collected in an appendix. Everybody wanted peace. How long a nation which had fought the world during four years could still resist was doubtful. They might resist for half a year it was estimated by some, perhaps a year, but that year would be as much an agony to the conquerors as to the conquered. Among the first principles of the settlement, this had been laid down by President Wilson—that he would not care to deal with the existing Government of Germany. The Germans forthwith attempted to accommodate their Government to this requirement, and our President was asked by Prince Max of Baden to "take in hand the restoration of peace under the programme set out in the President's memoranda of January 8, 1918, and in his later pronouncements."<sup>2</sup> These terms were communicated to all the Allies and were agreed to with but two changes, one in which England guarded herself against

<sup>1</sup> *What Really Happened at Paris*, p. 12. This book is a collection of articles from Americans prominent in the Peace Conference at Versailles. It has a preface or introduction by Colonel House and gives a very fair view of each question by a writer presumed to be particularly qualified.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

the term "freedom of the seas," and the other, which Germany accepted, that she make reparation for damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property at sea and from the air, and not from land only.<sup>1</sup>

What became of these terms after the Germans had laid down their arms and the victors began to prepare the terms of punishment? They were forgotten. According to Secretary Lansing, they were found unsuitable for discussion as too general. This is what he says of the Fourteen Points alone, for he makes no comment as to the "subsequent utterances." By those subsequent utterances the Germans were protected against purely punitive damages. Most people would have thought that this was the bargain, and that there were abundant principles of compensation remaining out of which the victors might have inordinately reimbursed themselves. So far as I can see, however, any such moderation as this was treated with contempt. "Clemenceau made no pretence of considering himself bound by the Fourteen Points and left chiefly to others such concoctions as were necessary to save the scruples or the face of the President."<sup>2</sup>

All fair critics of the Versailles Treaty concede that it broke the terms upon which the Germans had been induced to lay down their arms, yet nearly all the French and many misinformed people outside of France revile the Germans for now attempting to break their word in the payments or even to obtain delay in the payments promised on the faith of promises broken by the Allies themselves.

The fact was that the Fourteen Points were vastly better known in our own country than they were in European countries, for Clemenceau and his friends had no intention of letting the populace get into their heads a doctrine so liberal and so inconvenient. "The French and British Press had given no adequate account of the negotiations between President Wilson, the Germans and the Allied countries concerning the pre-Armistice agreement. The people, therefore, had no idea, and I believe still have

<sup>1</sup> *What Really Happened at Paris*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Keyne's Economic Consequences of the Peace*, p. 35.

no realization that a solemn agreement was made as the basis of the peace terms before the Armistice.”<sup>1</sup>

The spirit of Clemenceau prevailed. We can see him as he sat there, for he has been described by so many, “an expression of bored tolerance, his arid humour, his biting sarcasm.” His more reasonable associate, Pichon, “he used and abused without recognition.”<sup>2</sup>

Are we to leave it to an Italian to acknowledge among Statesmen that “on the basis of these principles (the Fourteen Points) Germany, worn out by famine, demanded peace, as a solemn pledge. No one can affirm that the Treaty of Versailles is based even remotely on the declarations of the Entente or Woodrow Wilson’s pledges.”<sup>3</sup>

One thing was made known to Europe in advance as respects lenity. There had been regularly preached in England, at least, the principle that the Allied nations were not making war on the German *people*. We all remember that our President Wilson had often told us this. Often had he told us that the fault of Germany was in its Government. When, therefore, he induced the Germans to overthrow that Government, many expected that this would be regarded as a contribution towards the future peace of Europe, as well as an atonement in part for the national offence. As to the impression in England, Mr. Wells tells us :

Germany, exhausted and beaten, surrendered in 1918, upon the strength of these promises and upon the similar promises in President Wilson’s Fourteen Points, but the Conference at Versailles treated promises as “scraps of paper.” The peace imposed on the new Germany was a punitive peace.<sup>4</sup>

He says again :

It was repeatedly declared by the British and the Americans, if not by others, that they fought not against the German people,

<sup>1</sup> Bass, *The Peace Tangle*, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *What Really Happened*, etc., pp. 93, 25. “Not since Rome punished Carthage has such a treaty been written.” New York *Tribune*, May 8, 1919.

<sup>3</sup> Nitti, *Peaceless Europe*, pp. 54, 58. Nitti had been an actor in every phase of the great struggle and of the Peace Conference at Versailles. He takes up the promises and their abandonment *serialim*.

<sup>4</sup> H. G. Wells, in the American newspapers, November 10, 1921.

but the German imperialism. The British war propaganda, in particular, did its utmost to saturate Germany with that assurance and to hold out the guaranty of generous treatment provided there was a renunciation of German imperialism and militarism. Germany in 1918 surrendered upon the strength of these pronouncements.<sup>1</sup>

The whole plan of Clemenceau was to divert President Wilson, and successfully, indeed, did he divert him, from the policies which he had in his bosom and had proclaimed to the world before he sailed to France. Most interesting are the descriptions of the methods employed to keep his mind from his first principle and to throw around him an atmosphere which would unconsciously change his will. Those who are at the pains to follow up the melancholy end, which is in itself a new beginning of the world catastrophe, may read it in the very pleasant book by Thompson *The Peace Conference Day by Day* and in Bass's excellent and serious *The Peace Tangle*, together with *What Really Happened at Paris*. Of course, we are not to forget at all the graphic pictures in the economic discussion by Keynes.

Enough is it to say that when Mr. Lloyd George finally reported the terms to Parliament he confessed them to be "terrible." They have been denounced in our own United States Senate.<sup>2</sup> Caillaux among Frenchmen has exposed at least the absurdities of the indemnity, if not its cruelty.<sup>3</sup>

While assessing, as has been said, almost incalculable indemnity upon the Germans, and before proceeding to carve off pieces of their territory and to regulate their internal affairs, the Allies appropriated a very considerable item which might, as Lansing says, have been used by the Germans in ordinary settlements to pay the principal debt. What they did, besides appropriating the German merchant marine, was to take away Germany's colonies and put them under the sequestration known as *mandate*. Thus the vast colonial asset of Germany was, technically, as

<sup>1</sup> H. G. Wells, in the American newspapers, November 10, 1921.

<sup>2</sup> The late Senator Knox's contempt for them was well known. Senator Johnson, California, was not moderate in his terms: "In my judgment the reparation provisions of the Versailles Treaty are revolting to advocates of future peace and every lover of liberty." October 18, 1921.

<sup>3</sup> *Ou va la France* (1922).



Lansing says, not given to anybody. In the long run that, however, is just what would happen. The country receiving the mandate for any particular colony would in the end possess the colony. From Germany, at all events, the colony was taken away, and this being done in advance, she lost that asset entirely as a resource of payment.

Many are the details in which the bargain was broken, both in letter and in spirit, and a punitive assessment inflicted. The world knows them and they need not be dwelt upon any further in this volume. Under the terms of reparation the Germans were to pay enough even to provide pensions for the soldiery of the Allies. How language could be strained to mean this is inconceivable and that it was never meditated at the outset is admitted. Our own country got nothing and claimed nothing. To what extent, through our being represented in the Conference at Versailles, we are in part responsible for vindictive terms, it is not necessary to decide. If we helped to impose more than it was possible for the vanquished to bear, and more than we had led them to fear, we at least took nothing ourselves.

Only one thing could result from the complete enforcement of a treaty condemned by every competent statistician or economist in the world. Either Germany must be allowed by slave labour to under-sell every other country, or she must in destitution ally herself with Russia to get what aid or resource she can from the race she despises and has fought so long.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As this work goes to press the Germans have signed what is partly a commercial and partly a political treaty with Russia, and this without first consulting the Allies in Conference at Genoa. France, which, behind England's back made a treaty with the Kemalists, is outraged at such breach of faith.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A PRINCIPLE WHOLLY OVERLOOKED AT VERSAILLES

THE schoolboy in future years, told of a gigantic struggle in 1914 between the Teutons and the Slavs, will turn to the page of Tannenberg.<sup>1</sup> The victory on the Marne, in which we rejoice, saved one of two kindred races from domination by another, but the victory at Tannenberg flung back an alien host that would have engulfed them both. Between France and Germany there existed, indeed, a different governmental policy; between their artisans, their peasants and their clergy, scarcely any difference at all. Between both these fine races, on the one hand, and the Russian on the other, existed a difference in customs, in moral ideas, in conception of government and society, and in nearly every aspiration of life.

When the present shall have become the past, when the voice of anger shall at length be still, when reason can again be heard, signally will it stand forth that the origin of the recent war was the alliance in 1892 between France and Russia, an alliance at that very time exposed as false and wrong by the one great moral genius in Russia whom even a despot could not silence; an alliance then unprovoked by any German act; an alliance by which a non-European race, led by the most wicked of all courts, got for the first time a military partner in the West together with supplies of unlimited wealth, while the Germans, practically surrounded, were hated by each and overwhelmingly outnumbered by both.

<sup>1</sup> Strangely enough, Teuton and Slav met on this same field of Tannenberg in 1410, when the Slavs prevailed and invaded the present Germany. It was around a monument which commemorates this ancient struggle that the one of 1914 was fought. Hindenburg, *Out of My Life*, vol. i, p. 114.

The unimpassioned historian will record that in the year 1914 the Teutonic race was compelled to defend on its own soil the civilization of Western Europe against an enormous, half-Asiatic race, which, led by a despotic, ignoble court, had been successfully pressing during many ages toward the warm Atlantic, which, encircling where it could not directly crush the more civilized nations of Central Europe, had absorbed the rich plains of Poland, both shores of the Gulf of Finland and the Teutonic provinces on the Baltic, and which by incessant menace or intrigue in the Balkans was pushing its baleful foot toward the Eastern Adriatic.

History will record that had the Great War ended according to all that was probable when it began, the Russian despotism, gorged as well as armed with the spoils of Westphalia and doubled in power at home and abroad, would have scorned the protests of her puny allies. The Russian despotism would have been indefinitely prolonged. Russian battleships would have anchored at Kiel and occupied the Elbe; Russian governors would have flaunted their prostitutes through new scenes of extortion in the cultured cities of Prussia and Bavaria, and Russian legions would have flung their drunken challenges to France and England across the Rhine.

History will record that England, seeing this consequence possible, would at the last moment have held back from joining in war the basest of Governments against a race high in arts and public order and desired peace, but that the Government of France, linked exultingly to the Vladimirs, the Sukhomlinoffs, the Sazonoffs, and the Rasputins, hastened with Russia to mobilize; that, war being forced upon Germany by Russia, the alliances were put into action and England was compelled either to expose France to possible loss of territory on the British Channel where Britain would be herself endangered, or to support Russia in a war of conquest.

Signally indeed will it appear that the Treaty of Versailles in assessing penalties upon Germany proceeded upon two fundamental errors, one in holding Germany to be guilty alone, the other in allowing to the guilty nothing

for circumstances undeniably extenuating. Germany had been dangerously encircled by three powerful countries in common military conference, one vexed by her navy, the second impelled by revenge, the third greedy for territory on the Baltic, at the Dardanelles, and in the Balkans. The last named had actually mobilized.

For these reasons the decision of Germany to resort to military action was made in a perilous hour and under direct menace from Russia. Next, Germany had at enormous sacrifice saved Europe from the Slav, who had been instigated by France, now the loudest claimant for reimbursement. Finally, it is clear that the German Government did, though late, endeavour with England to stop the general mobilization by Russia, but that France did not exert herself in that respect at all. In the assessment of indemnities France should bear part of the charge.

Eleven thousand four hundred million gold marks have thus far been paid by Germany under the awful terms of Versailles, and yet the point has not been reached at which any part can be applied on her penalties and debt. Stripped of her armies, she at last lies naked to the Slav. Must she seek an alliance with that hated race, either to escape bondage from the West or to get repose from the East? Fatal day, as every German knows! Once the Slav armies occupy Germany, even to assist her, they will never voluntarily quit her soil. Germany thenceforward passes into anarchy.



## APPENDIX A

### VON MOLTKE'S SUMMARY OF DECEMBER 1912

In December 1912, Von Moltke made a long "Memorandum" of the military situation to the War Ministry. It is too long for complete quotation here, but can be found in the book by Ludendorff, called *Problems of the General Staff*, in Volume I at page 57. He reviews the certainty that England will be against Germany, with France and Russia, but Italy "has no vital interest in a conflict between Austria and Russia. While Germany and Austria will be fighting for their existence, Italy will hardly be threatened."

He has had an interview a few days since with a representative of the Italian General Staff, who says that "no matter what the pretext," Italy will not contribute her third army, which had been counted upon.

He then adds three appendices, of which I give the two pertinent ones, as follows :

"Under I. of the Appendix are the forces which Germany can put into the field in the West in a war with the Triple Entente, in battalions, squadrons and batteries, which can be opposed to the forces at the disposal of France and England. The tables show an inferiority on the side of Germany of 124 battalions ; if Belgium be added to the number of our enemies, the figure is 192 battalions. The Italian Army is left out of account, as it will not participate. On the other hand, the French Alpine army, which will be immobilized by the Italians, is also left out of the calculation.<sup>1</sup> If the Italian third army were brought to Germany, the two allies would have a slight superiority. But it is immaterial to us whether Italy assembles two or twelve army corps behind her Alpine frontier. It would be an extraordinary operation to force that frontier. Until it is opened the whole Italian army will be standing idle, rifle in hand, without being able to fire a shot. Germany must gain the decision alone and unaided. While in 1870 she had a superiority in infantry of 106 battalions over France, as well as an immense preponderance of artillery, and fought this one opponent with her rear secured, *she has now to take the field against France with a great inferiority in infantry (though still with a slight superiority in artillery), and will further be attacked in the rear by Russia.* The superiority of our artillery rests at the moment on our more marked development of high-angle fire (field-howitzers) and our heavy artillery of the field army. Moreover, we are ahead of the French with the provision of field-kitchens and tents, as well as our infantry rifle. But it is only a question of money for France to catch up with us in these respects. In time she

<sup>1</sup> "Things turned out otherwise in 1914, and our inferiority was considerably greater."—Ludendorff.

will be able to get level with us and even overtake us. On the other hand, she cannot overtake us as regards the number of men fit for service who are at our disposal as long as we manage to secure them for the army.

“ Part II of the Appendix shows that in the East, Russia enjoys a very great numerical superiority. A comparison of the forces which Germany, Austria and Roumania combined can put into the field against Russia reveals a Russian superiority of 1,374 battalions, 319 squadrons and 82 batteries. At the present moment Russia is still very much behind-hand with the reorganization, equipment and arming of her forces, so that for the time being the Triple Alliance need not be afraid of an armed conflict even with her in spite of her numerical superiority. But when we look forward into the future, we must keep present in our minds the fact that in view of the enormous sums Russia is spending on the reorganization of her army, she will be stronger with every year that passes. It is just as impossible for Germany to try and compete with Russia as a land power, as it is for her to attempt to catch up with England as a sea power. But it is just as incumbent upon her to leave no stone unturned to employ all the resources which are still at her disposal on a large scale, in order to maintain that position *vis-a-vis* our neighbours which we enjoyed before they brought their armed forces up to the present level and began to think of increasing them.

“ The military situation in our frontier provinces requires special attention. We have to expect, certainly in the East, and possibly in the West also, an attack immediately on the proclamation of mobilization. If such an attack were not beaten off, by the destruction of railways, bridges and tunnels, our mobilization, the arming of the fortresses and our deployment, would be seriously interfered with. It is of the very greatest importance that our troops in these regions should be reinforced and our fortresses be put into an advanced state of defence.

“ I believe I have established the necessity of increasing our military forces and improving our home defences in what I have said above. The political situation will make these measures an inexorable necessity. Of course, the satisfaction by the nation of the demands made here and dealt with in greater detail in Part II of the Memorandum, will involve great personal and pecuniary sacrifices. But in any case these sacrifices will be far less than those we should have to face in case of a lost war.

“ We must also point out that our neighbours have made, and are now making, similar sacrifices in order to strengthen their military forces.

“ France makes much greater personal demands on her population than we do on ours. During the first Morocco crisis she spent about 300 millions on the strengthening of her eastern fortresses.

“ This year Russia demanded and obtained from her national assembly, 1,300 million marks.

"In the last three years England has spent large sums to give effect to the Haldane reforms.

"Switzerland has introduced a new army organization at a heavy cost.

"Belgium is now carrying through a new Defence Bill, by which her army will be brought up to a mobilization strength of 300,000 men. She has laid out enormous sums to modernize the fortifications of Antwerp.

"Under the pressure of the political crisis Austria has been compelled to demand very large credits for that reorganization of her army which is long overdue.

"Germany, too, must be prepared to make sacrifices. The programme for the provision of the most urgent requirements which is drawn up in Part II must be carried through with the greatest energy, so that in the future Germany, trusting to her own strength, can give the political leaders of the nation a support which is solid enough to meet all emergencies."

## APPENDIX B

### THE TREATY OF ALLIANCE, OCTOBER 7, 1879, BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND GERMANY

Considering that their Majesties, the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, and the Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, must esteem it to be their unavoidable duty as sovereigns to watch under all circumstances, over the safety of their Empires and the tranquillity of their peoples ;

Considering that the two Monarchs will be able, by a solid alliance of the two Empires, in the kind of that which previously existed, more easily to accomplish this duty, as also more efficaciously ;

Considering, in fine, that an intimate agreement between Austro-Hungary and Germany can threaten no one, but is rather calculated to consolidate European peace as created by the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin ;

Their Majesties, the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary and the Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, promising to each other solemnly never to give any aggressive tendency whatsoever to their purely defensive agreement, have resolved to conclude a reciprocal alliance of peace and protection ;

In this aim, their Majesties have appointed as their plenipotentiaries :

For his Majesty the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, his real Privy Councillor, the Minister of the Imperial House, as also for Foreign Affairs, Lieutenant Julius, Count Andrassy, etc. ;

For his Majesty the Emperor of Germany, his Ambassador and plenipotentiary extraordinary, Lieutenant-General Prince Henry VII of Reuss, etc. ;

Who have both entered into relations with each other to-day in Vienna, and, after showing each other their powers, duly recognized as good and sufficient, have settled what follows :

*Article I.* If, contrarily to what may be hoped and contrarily to the sincere wishes of the two high contracting parties, one of the two Empires were to be attacked by Russia, the two high contracting parties are bound to lend each other reciprocal aid with the whole of their Imperial military power, and, subsequently, to conclude no peace except conjointly and in agreement.

*Article II.* If one of the two high contracting parties were to be attacked by another Power, the other high contracting party binds itself, by the present act, not only not to uphold the aggressor against its high Ally, but at the least, to observe a benevolent neutrality with regard to the contracting party aforesaid.

If, however, in the case previously mentioned, the Power attacking were to be upheld by Russia, whether by way of active co-operation or by military measures that should threaten the Power attacked, then the obligation of reciprocal assistance, with entire military forces—obligation stipulated in Article I of this treaty—would immediately become executory, and the military operations of the two high contracting parties would also, in such circumstances, be conducted jointly until the conclusion of peace.

*Article III.* This treaty, in conformity with its pacific character and to avoid all false interpretation, will be held secret by all the high contracting parties.

It may only be communicated to a Third Power with the knowledge of the two parties and after a special agreement between them.

Considering the intentions expressed by the Emperor Alexander at the Alexandrowo interview, the two contracting parties nourish the hope that Russia's preparation will not, in reality, become threatening to them ; for this reason, there is at present no motive for communication.

But, if, against all expectation, this hope should be rendered vain, the two contracting parties would recognize that it was a duty of loyalty to inform the Emperor Alexander, at least confidentially, that they must deem any attack directed against one of them as being directed against both.

To testify which, the plenipotentiaries have signed this treaty with their own hands and have fixed their seals thereto.

Made at Vienna, on the 7th of October, 1879.

(Signed) ANDRASSY,

PRINCE HENRY VII OF REUSS.

## APPENDIX C

### THE FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE OF 1892

The French issued after the war, when they first disclosed the terms of this agreement, a special Yellow Book upon this subject.



The essential terms of it can be found in the pamphlet of March, 1919, No. 136, of the American Association for International Conciliation. The body of the engagements is as follows :

DRAFT OF MILITARY CONVENTION.

" France and Russia, animated by a common desire to preserve the peace, and having no other end in mind than to ward off the necessities of a defensive war, provoked by an attack of the forces of the Triple Alliance against either of them, have agreed upon the following provisions :

" 1. If France is attacked by Germany, or by Italy supported by Germany, Russia shall employ all its available forces to fight Germany.

" 2. In case the forces of the Triple Alliance, or of one of the Powers which are a party to it, should be mobilized, France and Russia, at the first indication of the event, and without a previous agreement being necessary, shall mobilize all their forces immediately and simultaneously, and shall transport them as near to their frontiers as possible.

" 3. The available forces which must be employed against Germany shall be, for France, 1,300,000 men ; for Russia, from 700,000 to 800,000 men.

" These forces shall begin complete action with the greatest dispatch, so that Germany will have to fight at the same time in the East and in the West.

" 4. The Staffs of the Armies of the two countries shall constantly plan in concert in order to prepare for and facilitate the execution of the measures set forth above.

" They shall communicate to each other, in time of peace, all the information regarding the armies of the Triple Alliance which is in, or shall come into, their possession.

" The ways and means of corresponding in time of war shall be studied and arranged in advance.

" 5. France and Russia shall not conclude a separate peace.

" 6. The present Convention shall have the same duration as the Triple Alliance.

" 7. All the clauses enumerated above shall be kept absolutely secret."

An exchange of letters of transmission and of unimportant comment upon this document by General de Boisdeffre, the army representative who conducted the affair for the French in St. Petersburg.

Two letters from Montebello, French Ambassador, to Casimir Périer, President at Paris, and one by Mouravieff, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Delcassé, French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

A reply by Delcassé.

All these intermediate documents are summed up in the report of Delcassé himself to Loubet, President of the French Republic, on the 12th of August, 1899, when Delcassé has to report what he considers, after a visit to St. Petersburg, a strengthening of this alliance, so that

it will outlive even the dissolution of the Triple Alliance, against which the original arrangement was supposed to be a justifiable protection. The following is Delcassé's report in full :

Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Loubet, President of the French Republic.

" PARIS, 12 August, 1899.

" MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

" Your Excellency knows with what idea in mind I went to St. Petersburg. Our arrangements with Russia are of two kinds : *a general diplomatic agreement*, expressed in the letters of 9/21 August, 1891 and 15/27 August, 1891, signed by Giers, Mohrenheim and Ribot, and which stipulated that the two Governments will consider in concert any question capable of putting the peace of Europe in jeopardy ; *and a military convention of 23 December 1893 to January 1894*, which concerns an aggressive act on the part of one of the Powers of the Triple Alliance, and whose duration is limited to the duration of the Triple Alliance.

" *But what would happen if the Triple Alliance should dissolve otherwise than by the volition of all its members ; if, for example, Emperor Francis Joseph, who seems at times the only bond between rival and even enemy races, should suddenly disappear ; if Austria were threatened by a dismemberment which, perhaps, is after all desirable, which, perhaps, might be countenanced and which, in any case, one might become anxious to turn to account ?* What could be more capable of compromising the general peace, and of upsetting the balance between the European forces ? And what situation, furthermore, would more deserve to find France and Russia, not only united in a common plan, but ready even for its execution ?

" Now it is just at the precise moment when the military convention should work, that it would cease to exist : born of the Triple Alliance, it would vanish with it. That is a deficiency which has troubled me constantly since I became Minister of Foreign Affairs ; and it has been my firm resolve to neglect no opportunity to overcome it. I have found in your lofty and prudent patriotism a powerful support. Sure of receiving from Emperor Nicholas a friendly welcome, I decided to return to Count Mouravieff, whose views have always been in perfect accord with mine, the visit which he paid me in Paris last October. Arriving in St. Petersburg Friday evening, the fourth of August, I was invited to breakfast with Their Majesties on Sunday, at Peterhof. After breakfast, the Emperor took me into his study : first he was good enough to tell me what esteem and approval my conduct during the last Franco-English crisis had aroused in him. We ran over the different problems which had arisen during the course of the year, and reviewed the general world situation. Then, approaching the relations between France and Russia, I revealed to the Emperor my belief and apprehension that the alliance would be disarmed in case one of those very events should arise in view of which it was formed : ' Since our agreement of August, 1891, extends to

all important questions, does not Your Majesty think that the military Convention of 1894, which is the instrument for making that agreement effective, should have the same duration, that is to say, as long as the general and permanent interests of our two nations remain solidary; and do you not think also that the work of Emperor Alexander III and of President Carnot will surely receive the confirmation of Your Majesty and of the new President of the French Republic ?

"The Emperor assured me that such was his feeling; that he was anxious to continue essentially in the path indicated by his father, and to draw closer the bonds forged for the common good of France and Russia. At that moment, I took the liberty of submitting to the Emperor the draft of a declaration which I had drawn up that morning. In it the arrangement of 1891 is solemnly confirmed; but the scope is singularly extended; while in 1891 the two Governments expressed anxiety only for the maintenance of the general peace, my plan provides that they should concern themselves just as much with 'the maintenance of the balance between the European forces.'

"In short, by attaching the military Convention to the diplomatic arrangement, this plan assures to it the same duration.

"The Emperor seemed to think that I had expressed his idea exactly; he called Count Mouravieff, to whom at His Majesty's request I read the declaration. An understanding already existed between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and myself on the fundamental basis of the plan. It was decided that the new arrangement, of which the contents and the very existence should remain absolutely secret, should be established undeniably in the form of letters which Count Mouravieff and I would exchange. That was done Wednesday morning, the day I left St. Petersburg.

"DELCAST."

## APPENDIX D

### SECRET AGREEMENT OF 1916-17 BETWEEN FRANCE AND RUSSIA

#### I

The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs (M. Sazonoff) to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. February 24 (March 9), 1916.

(No. 948)

"PETROGRAD.

"Please refer to my telegram No. 6063 of 1915. At the forthcoming Conference you may be guided by the following general principles:

*"The political agreements concluded between the Allies during the war must remain intact, and are not subject to revision. They*

include the agreement with France and England on Constantinople, the Straits, Syria, and Asia Minor, and also the London Treaty with Italy. All suggestions for the future delimitation of Central Europe are at present premature, but in general one must bear in mind that *we are prepared to allow France and England complete freedom in drawing up the Western frontiers of Germany, in the expectation that the allies on their part would allow us equal freedom in drawing up our frontiers with Germany and Austria.*

"It is particularly necessary to insist on the exclusion of the Polish question from the subject of international discussion and on *the elimination of all attempts to place the future of Poland under the guarantee and the control of the Powers.*"<sup>1</sup>

"With regard to the Scandinavian States, it is necessary to endeavour to keep back Sweden from any action hostile to us, and at the same time to examine betimes measures for attracting Norway on our side in case it should prove impossible to prevent a war with Sweden.

"Roumania has already been offered all the political advantages which could induce her to take up arms, and therefore it would be perfectly futile to search for new baits in this respect.

"The question of pushing out the Germans from the Chinese market is of very great importance, but its solution is impossible without the participation of Japan. It is preferable to examine it at the Economic Conference, where the representatives of Japan will be present. This does not exclude the desirability of a preliminary exchange of views on the subject between Russia and England by diplomatic means.

(Signed) "SAZONOFF."

## II

Confidential Telegram from M. Pokrovsky (M. Sazonoff's second successor as Foreign Minister) to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. January 30 (February 12), 1917.

(No. 502)

"PETROGRAD.

"Copy to London confidentially.<sup>2</sup> At an audience with the Most High,<sup>3</sup> M. Doumergue<sup>4</sup> submitted to the Emperor the desire

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to compare this declaration of the Russian Government in February 1916 with President Wilson's statement in his speech to the American Senate on January 22, 1917. President Wilson said: "I take it for granted . . . that statesmen everywhere are agreed that there should be united, independent, and autonomous Poland," and, speaking at Leeds on September 26, 1917, Mr. Asquith said: "There is Poland, as to whom, I, and, I believe, all our people, heartily endorse the wise and generous words of President Wilson."

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Balfour stated (House of Commons, December 19, 1917) that "London" did not mean the British Foreign Office. He added: "We had never heard of it at all at that time." "London" therefore probably means the Russian Embassy in London.

<sup>3</sup> The Tsar.

<sup>4</sup> French Ambassador at Petrograd.



of France to secure for herself at the end of the present war the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine and a special position in the valley of the River Saar, as well as to attain the political separation from Germany of her trans-Rhenish districts and their organization on a separate basis, in order that in future the River Rhine might form a permanent strategical frontier against a Germanic invasion. Doumergue expressed the hope that the Imperial Government would not refuse immediately to draw up its assent to these suggestions in a formal manner.

"His Imperial Majesty was pleased to agree to this in principle, in consequence of which I requested Doumergue, after communicating with his Government, to let me have the draft of an agreement, which would then be given a formal sanction by an exchange of Notes between the French Ambassador and myself.

"Proceeding thus to meet the wishes of our Ally, I nevertheless consider it my duty to recall the standpoint put forward by the Imperial Government in the telegram of February 24, 1916, No. 948, to the effect that 'while allowing France and England complete liberty in delimiting the Western frontiers of Germany we expect that the Allies on their part will give us equal liberty in delimiting our frontiers with Germany and Austria Hungary.'

"Hence the impending exchange of Notes on the question raised by Doumergue will justify us in asking the French Government simultaneously to confirm its assent to allowing Russia freedom of action in drawing up her future frontiers in the west.<sup>1</sup> Exact data on the question will be supplied by us in due course to the French Cabinet.

"In addition we deem it necessary to stipulate for the assent of France to the removal at the termination of the war of the disqualifications resting on the Aland Islands.<sup>2</sup> Please explain the above to Briand and wire the results.

*(Signed)* "POKROVSKY."

### III

A telegram from the Russian Ambassador in Paris to M. Pokrovsky, January 31 (February 13), 1917:

(No. 88)

"Copy to London. Referring to your telegram No. 507, confidentially, I immediately communicated in writing its contents to Briand, who told me that he would not fail to give me an official

<sup>1</sup> I.e. the west of Russia.

<sup>2</sup> The Aland Islands are situated at the entrance of the Gulf of Bothnia, close to the Swedish coast, and less than 100 miles from Stockholm. They belong to Russia, and after the Crimean War a Convention, which was annexed to the Treaty of Paris, was made between Russia, France, and Britain that they should not be fortified and that no military or naval establishments should be maintained upon them. The population of these islands is Swedish by descent, and numbers about 19,000.

reply of the French Government, but that he could at once declare, on his own behalf, that the satisfaction of the wishes contained in your telegram will meet with no difficulties.

(Signed) "ISVOLSKY."

#### IV

On February 1 (14), 1917, the Russian Foreign Minister addressed the following note to the French Ambassador at Petrograd :

"In your Note of to-day's date your Excellency was good enough to inform the Imperial Government that the Government of the Republic was contemplating the inclusion in the terms of peace to be offered to Germany the following demands and guarantees of a territorial nature :

" 1. Alsace-Lorraine to be restored to France.

" 2. The frontiers are to be extended at least up to the limits of the former principality of Lorraine, and are to be drawn up at the discretion of the French Government so as to provide for the strategical needs and for the inclusion in French territory of the entire iron district of Lorraine and of the entire coal district of the Saar Valley.

" 3. The rest of the territories situated on the left bank of the Rhine which now form part of the German Empire are to be entirely separated from Germany and freed from all political and economic dependence upon her.<sup>1</sup>

" 4. The territories of the left bank of the Rhine outside French territory are to be constituted an autonomous and neutral State, and are to be occupied by French troops until such time as the enemy States have completely satisfied all the conditions and guarantees indicated in the Treaty of Peace.

"Your Excellency stated that the Government of the Republic would be happy to be able to rely upon the support of the Imperial Government for the carrying out of its plans. *By order of his Imperial Majesty, my most august master, I have the honour, in the name of the Russian Government, to inform your excellency by the present Note that the Government of the Republic may rely upon the support of the Imperial Government for the carrying out of its plans as set out above.*"

#### V

Finally, on February 26 (March 11), 1917, the Russian Ambassador at Paris sent the following telegram to M. Pokrovsky :

(No. 168)

"See my reply to telegram No. 167, No. 2. The Government of the French Republic, anxious to confirm the importance of

<sup>1</sup> This would include Rhenish-Prussia with the cities and towns of Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle, Coblenz, Treves, Crefeld and Bonn, a detached fragment of Oldenburg ; a part of Hesse, with the towns of Mayence, Worms and

the treaties concluded with the Russian Government in 1915, for the settlement on the termination of the war of the question of Constantinople and the Straits in accordance with Russia's aspirations, anxious, on the other hand, to secure for its Ally in military and industrial respects all the guarantees desirable for the safety and the economic development of the Empire, *recognize Russia's complete liberty in establishing her Western frontiers.*

(Signed) "ISVOLSKY."

On the very next day (March 12), the Russian Revolution took place, and on March 15th the Tsar abdicated.

#### THE PRESENT POSITION.

Apparently the design of driving Germany back to the left bank of the Rhine has now been abandoned by the French Government, although there has been no official statement to this effect.

Mr. Balfour, in the House of Commons on December 19, 1917, said of this plan :

"We have never expressed our approval of it, nor do I believe it presents the policy of successive French Governments who have held office during the war. Never did we desire, and never did we encourage the idea, that a bit of Germany should be cut off from the parent State and erected into some kind of . . . independent Government on the left bank of the Rhine. His Majesty's Government were never aware that was seriously entertained by any French statesman."

It must be noted in this connection that by the Declaration of September 5, 1914, the Allies undertook to make peace in common. Any arrangement between France and Russia, therefore, equally affects Great Britain.

#### APPENDIX E

### PRESIDENT WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS AND PUBLIC UTTERANCES AS TO THE BASIS OF PEACE

It will be remembered the Armistice was accepted by the Germans and their arms laid down not on the Fourteen Points alone but on President Wilson's other utterances respecting the moderation of the victors.

On February 11, 1918, Mr. Wilson asserted :

"There shall be *no annexations, no contributions, no punitive damages.* . . . 'Self-determination' is not a mere phrase. . . .

Bingen ; and the Palatinate with the towns of Ludwigshafen, Kaiserslautern Zweibrücken, Neustadt, and Landau.

Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims among rival states."

In his speech of July 4, 1918, President Wilson urged :

"The settlement of every question . . . upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own external influence or mastery."

On September 27, 1918, he said :

*"The impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just."*

"No special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all.

"There can be no leagues or alliances or special covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations. . . .

"There can be no special, selfish, economic combinations within the League and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion, except as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in the League of Nations itself as a means of discipline or control.

"All international agreements or treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world."

The foregoing were more essential as a bargain with which to induce Germany to the Armistice than were the Fourteen Points, the essential parts of which are as follows :

"3. The removal so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the Peace, and associating themselves for its maintenance.

"4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

"5. A free open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all Colonial claims.

"6, 7, 8, and 11. The evacuation and restoration of invaded territory.

"8. The righting of the 'wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine.'

"13. An independent Poland is to be established of 'territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations,' which shall be 'assured a free and secure access to the sea.'"



From the pre-armistice agreement itself :

“ Compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property, by the aggression of Germany, by land, by sea, or from the air.”

## APPENDIX F

## THE FRENCH NEGRO ARMIES

Following the bestowal of the Goncourt literary prize on the Martinique Negro Maran, General Mangin gave out some utterances which are reported in the *New York World* of January 8, 1922. The question of the social equality of blacks with whites does not interest us in the present discussion, except as the French blend it with a justification of their use of black troops for armies in Europe. It may be added that Mangin is of high rank in the French Army and is a man of both ability and culture. I have reduced without altering, the article in the *World* as follows :

Paris, December 28.—“ ‘ An end must be put to this absurd legend of the inferiority of the black races. It is based solely on the tradition of slavery and is not at all flattering to the white races ! ’

\* \* \* \* \*

“ The General gained his affection for the coloured races during the twenty years he spent in colonial military and administrative commands. He is not merely a soldier, but has considerable competence in literary talent, which gives weight to his remarks on culture among the negro races.

“ ‘ There really is an intellectual elite among the blacks, whom liberty has introduced to our culture,’ he asserted in an interview. ‘ And experience has demonstrated that this elite possesses the ability to excel in every domain of human activity.

“ ‘ Civilization has its source in Yellow Asia, Black India and Black Egypt. Greece dates only from 1,200 or 1,500 years before Christ, and Rome was only a tardy parvenu in the history of world development. Our alphabets are Asiatic and our figures Arab. In short, the white race is only a stage in humanity, not the first nor probably the last. There is no guarantee that it will not be outdistanced by the coloured races in future ages.’

\* \* \* \* \*

“ ‘ By its haughty manner toward the masses of negroes within its territory the great American democracy, otherwise so generous and humane, seems to forget at this point the Good Samaritan,’ writes M. Grosclaude. ‘ With us the old regime did not wait for

the proclamation of the League of the Rights of Man to treat our coloured subjects as members of the family. In truth we have never been a race of slave dealers. Doubtless a few were recruited among our coastal population at the time of the great adventure, but our friends of Great Britain and the Low Countries were always our superiors in this sort of navigation. Even since the abolition of slavery, the Hollanders have always exploited their possessions in the strong manner, though with a marvellous practical sense. The English have excelled in the exploitation of the most populous colonies by an infinitesimal number of white officials. But the English do not admit—I do not say legally but morally—the union of white men and black women.

“The Frenchman is infinitely more cordial with his black male cousins and more gallant with his black female cousins. Generally the French resident, civilian or military, lives on excellent terms with the local population as soon as they realize we are not there to persecute them or hold them to ransom, and that there is every advantage in supporting themselves on our tempered tutelage and good fellowship. That is what distinguishes us from the English—correct, loyal and haughty, who know better how to make themselves feared than to make themselves loved.

“I believe we are the only nation in the world which treats the blacks as brothers—as inferior brothers, if, in default of sufficient moral or intellectual emancipation, they have not attained their social majority; as equals when their rich primitive nature, brought to value by our teaching, is raised above the common level.

“The awarding of the Goncourt prize to a coloured writer has a high significance. It is a witness to the fraternal sentiment of our country for all her sons, without distinction of shades or origins, when those sons honour the country by their words or by their deeds.”

Since the foregoing was written, Mr. Ray Stannard Baker's illuminating articles have appeared in the *New York Times* with exceptionally valuable documents, apparently from the private files of President Wilson. Graphically it is shown that both Lloyd George and Mr. Wilson deplored the use, and foresaw the dangers to Europe, of the importation of black armies from French Africa.

Nothing can be more explicit than the results of the conversation between Clemenceau and these two statesmen on this point. To M. Clemenceau it was made specific that the pacts of the Covenant relating to mandatories were to exclude other use of colonial blacks than that of local defence and police. The very minutes of the conversations as recorded by the Secretaries, are reproduced in the *New York Times* of February 12, 1922, and these show that Clemenceau could not have misunderstood the others. At all events, he must be set down as pretending to acquiesce.

Now the Covenant being prepared according to the Lloyd George-Wilson understanding, what occurred? The article came out of the

drafting committee altered. Why? Sir Maurice Hankey, the Secretary, reported:

“The alteration in Article XXII was made under instructions given personally to M. Fromageot by M. Clemenceau, the President of the Conference.”

Then, continues Mr. Baker, a discussion ensued. Clemenceau insisted the change was necessary to France. Mr. Wilson demurred. He referred to the prior understanding and prevailed. The language was to be altered back again to forbid the “training of natives for other than police purposes and defence of territory.”

But Clemenceau would not stop. Though the reading was restored, a chance remained of achieving his purpose in those provisions which give powers to the mandatories to work out the application, so the following is what he accomplished. While in the mandatories section the British and the Belgians are kept down in their colonial administrations to the strict words of the Covenant, the French get this sudden exception in Article III as to French Togoland and the Cameroons:

“It is understood, however, that the troops thus raised may, in the event of a general war, be utilized to repulse an attack or for defence of territory outside that over which the mandate is administered.”

This unfairness, being exposed by the Secretariat, may not yet succeed, for the Mandatories Sections have not yet been accepted by the League of Nations. “Meantime,” says Mr. Baker, “the process of militarizing Africa goes on.” He very properly draws our attention to the instance of ancient Rome in her decline, resorting to her savages to fight more virile neighbours in the North.

## APPENDIX G

### RUSSIAN MILITARY AND RAILWAY PREPARATIONS AND MOBILIZATION

The contributions by Germany to this subject are not readily obtainable in this country, so the following from Von Eggeling, German Military Attaché at St. Petersburg and from General H. Von Kuhl, formerly chief of staff of the First Army, will be of interest. The book by the former was published in 1919, *The Russian Mobilization and the Outbreak of the War*; von Kuhl's, published in 1920, is *The German General Staff in Preparation and Conduct of the World War*. They have not been translated.

*Russian Increases.* Reorganization was begun in 1910, with as much secrecy as possible (Eggeling, 9). The losses of the Japanese War were replaced by 1911. In 1914 the military expenditures were two thousand six hundred million marks (Kuhl, 60). The universal

service law required four years with the colours. The German staff reckoned in 1913 on a Russian total of 38 reserve divisions; the force would be,

|                                    | Reservists. |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| For active formations .. .. .      | 748,000     |
| For reserve formations .. .. .     | 876,000     |
| For replacement.. .. .             | 205,000     |
| For communication formations .. .. | 40,000      |
|                                    | <hr/>       |
|                                    | 1,869,000   |
|                                    | <hr/>       |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| In both categories of reserve or a surplus of | 2,292,000 |
|---|-----------|

---

423,000

(Von Kuhl, 61-62)

This was in 1913. For the following year increases were planned, and in part carried out. Excluding Siberian and Turkestan troops, the strength of the Russian Army was 30 Army Corps, comprising 35½ cavalry or Cossack Divisions, 35 Reserve Divisions, and 40 National Defence Divisions.

The peace strength in the summer of 1914 was 1,581,000 officers and men; the war strength 3,461,750 (Kuhl, 104, 105).

The ultimate aim became that of creating an army which could take the offensive against Germany. All Russian Army questions after 1910 were viewed by the press in Russia from this angle (Egging, 9).

*The Military Railways.* These were created to permit the immediate transport of troops from Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan, to the German and Austrian frontiers. In peace times the forces were divided along the new lines to be rushed to the front (Kuhl, 76) France made a loan for these lines—one thousand million francs. The Siberian Railway was also double tracked to bring up the forces from there. In 1912 two great private roads (from Sosnowice to Warsaw and from Alexandrovs to Warsaw), were purchased by the Government. The Polish Railway officials were supplanted by Russians in 1912 (*ib.*).

#### RUSSIAN MILITARY MENACES IN 1914 BEFORE THE SERBIAN TROUBLE.

In 1911 the French Chief of Staff, Dubail, attended the Russian manœuvres, and the next year the Russian Chief, Shilinski, attended the French. France demanded Russian military increases in exchange for her seventeen thousand million francs (Kuhl, 72). This was charged by the Russian journal *Rjetsch*, on July 19, 1914 (*ib.*, 70). The Grand Duke Nicholas, desiring war in 1912, Sukhomlinoff answered that they were not yet ready, whereupon the former renewed his pressure



on preparations (Eggeling, 49-50). Nicholas planned a military demonstration for 1913, but was stopped by remonstrances that two years would yet be necessary (Eggeling, 16).

In 1913 the German General Staff believed that the Russian field forces of the first line could be ready on the fifth day of mobilization, and of the second line on the eighth (Kuhl, 82). The spring of 1914 witnessed enormous preparations, the Duma sanctioning increases equal to the entire peace strength of the Austrian and Hungarian Armies (Eggeling, 18). Continual test mobilizations were occurring, supplies were imported, coal reserves increased and rolling stock added. Grain export was stopped (*ib.*, 16-17, Kuhl, 66-67).

*Peace Reviews and Strengthening of Fortresses.* These were very common. In the autumn of 1913 General Joffre headed a mission to St. Petersburg to examine her military efficiency, and departing, remarked, "The Russian Army is at this moment the mightiest in the world" (Eggeling, 12-22). The troops around Vilna and Warsaw were presumed to concentrate against Germany, the Kiev forces against Austria. Sukhomlinoff announced himself ready in 1914 (*ib.*, 22).

*Final Movements after Serajevo.* Von Eggeling goes into great detail of the eventful last week. He discusses the revelations also of the Sukhomlinoff's trial. As to actual movement to the German frontier, Kuhl says that the plan carried out was that of 1912 (which was captured during the war), of crossing the German borders without declaration of war. "Our measures must in this connection be concealed by apparent diplomatic negotiations." On the very first day of August, that of Germany's declaration of war, "the border was crossed in four places by enemy patrols" (Kuhl, 79-80).

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